/136 cont./

142 The tribe at Gam in particular consists almost exclusively of comparatively large people who, even after a thorough washing, display a decidedly darker coloration than the other Auin.

162 According to my observations, there is something like one to two women for each man, and from two to three children for each woman.

162 847 [862] In this connection I would like to mention that newborn children are always killed if the mother is still nursing a child, which continues until about the third year of life. The killing is done immediately after birth by the mother, who buries the newborn child alive. The father has nothing to do with it. Since marital [853] intercourse continues during the nursing period and since this period lasts for about three years, it follows that approximately every third child is reared while those born in the meantime are killed without exception. This might well be a principal factor in the unquestionable decline in the population.

592 595 Since each woman has her special windscreen (hut), the man lives alternately with one and then another of his wives; the latter in turn have their children living with them, and it therefore follows that about three to four persons occupy each hut.

221 ●361 The size of the settlements (villages) is quite indefinite and changes according to the circumstances. During the dry season a settlement is formed usually by one to two families, whereas during the period of ample veld food, in other words, toward the end and shortly after /137/ [map appears here] /138/ the rainy season, sometimes up to 30 families join together to form a "village." In April, 1908, about 400 men were living in a settlement near Sidonitzaub. If their dependents are included, one will arrive at a figure of at least 1,000 persons.

[701] All the men are armed warriors.

161 As has already been noted, one can clearly observe a decrease in the population, which, judging by its rapid progress, can be designated as swiftly approaching extinction. Aside from infanti- [136] cide and malaria, the decrease of wild game may also be given as a reason for the population decline, since this decrease makes food more difficult to obtain. Older Auin state that in former times attacks by lions caused heavy losses.

[Text continues on page 7]

/147 cont./

222 Rosinkis of the Boers
So-called "wild cucumbers"
Mushrooms which grow on termite hills

251 The veld crop that has been gathered is kept in the huts in
[415] little sacks made of duiker or ibex leather.

/148/ The Auin also stores small caches of provisions by burying sacks of veld crops; he likewise buries tschamma or ostrich egg shells filled with water. In the tops of large trees one often finds, aside from animal hides, provisions of veld crops which are kept there. [Fig. 9 appears here.]

423 Land is held in common, that is, it is the common property of a horde consisting of several families. The game in this territory, as well as the wood and the veld crops, is exclusively for the use of the members of the community that holds the land. The watering places that are to be found there are available for general use, but only if water is abundant. If water is scarce, the local group that holds the land has exclusive right to it.

361 The local groups sometimes live at considerable distances
423 from one another so that the same land is used by several settle-
621 ments. The settlements, after all, do not consist of a fixed number of families, but rather of those who are gathered together in fortuitous groupings as the occasion arises. Whatever the accidental composition of the settlements may be, their members always move within a definite area, and it is always the members of the same larger horde who form the settlements.

423 Friendly hordes permit tracking, that is, game that has been
619 wounded on the land of one horde may be pursued on the territory of a friendly horde. A part of the booty is allotted to the "land-
[685] owner" within whose territory the game is killed. A definite agreement is required in each case since the Bushman attacks on sight any strange Bushman on his family's terrain.

628 Blood vengeance is not sought for a violation of territory if the local groups are especially friendly. The offender is driven off and, in addition, just as in Prussia, his "firearms" and booty are confiscated. The policing of the terrain is done by each Bushman on his communal land.

[721] If women are caught trespassing, they are taken prisoner and led to the settlement of the owners of the terrain. This frequently leads to war if the women are harmed sexually during their captivity.

[Text continues on page 32]

!KUNG

[26 cont.]

512 from about August 20th to the end of December, the following daily routine is normally observed. Before dawn, it becomes very cold, the people wake up, and the boys stir up the fire and put on it the remains of the evening meal. The old people move closer to the fire and go on sleeping until the sun comes up. Then they have their breakfast, which consists of the remains of the [462] evening meal. The able men now go hunting. The women continue to sit around the fire for awhile and nurse their children. [462] At about 10 o'clock the women and children, as well as the girls, go out in a group to look for veldkost. Almost every woman [462] old enough to bear children carries a child on her back, while a second child often rides on her shoulders. The smaller boys stay at home and help the old people, who get up about an hour later [361] to fetch water. The huts are never located close to the water: 1. because people get sick close to the water; 2. because the lions come there; 3. because the game would be frightened away. The watering place itself is visited quite irregularly, because in disturbed times the enemy lurks there, and occasionally also the police. The male and female doctors go into the bush, usually not very far, alone or only with a disciple, to gather medicine. Around four o'clock in the afternoon the women come back and begin to cook. Around this time, too, the men begin to return with the spoils of the hunt. When the sun goes down, [264] they all sit by the fire and eat. Each family has its own fire. Then some will continue to chat for awhile, while others go to sleep, and gradually it becomes quiet.

[264] They do not eat at noon. From eleven to four o'clock the camp is deserted, and even the old people sleep somewhere in the forest. The hunters and the women collecting veldkost also [27] take a long midday rest during the hot afternoon hours. During the hot season, on the other hand, they set out soon after midnight to hunt and search for veldkost, because later in the day the sand is too hot to walk on.

6. The Divisions of the Year

805 The Bushmen reckon time according to full moons, for example, agreeing to meet after three or four full moons, and

[36 cont.]

Dwellings

342 The dwelling of the Bushman consists of the simple windscreen, semicircular in form and about 150 centimeters high. On [177] several farms, however, even the Bushmen have taken to building [361] beehive huts in the Herero manner. The windscreens in a settle- [378] ment more or less form a circle, and the socha fire is to be found [372] near the windscreen of the village chief. During warm nights the [513] Bushmen do not sleep under the windscreen but outside it.

372

Fig. 3. Sticks for Firemaking, Kalahari Bushmen (Museum of Ethnology, Lurich).

[59 cont.]

20. Law

671 627 The norms of natural law among the Bushmen are the same as among us. The family head is at the same time the supreme judge. Since even the nearest kin group is regarded in a sense as a foreign state, however, the boundaries between law, war, and vengeance are exceedingly fluid. The domain of law, therefore, is actually confined to the family. Since the only [681] punishment that can be effectively inflicted is the death penalty, it is rarely applied among married men, [60] for the judges and executioners must provide for the condemned man's survivors. In olden times the women condemned to death were burned or beaten to death with the kirri, and the men were killed with the poisoned arrow.

423 The right to personal possession of utilitarian objects, honey, and certain types of veldkost is strictly respected. The soil is common property of the kin group, as is any big game [224] that is killed. If a wounded animal dies in the domain of the neighboring kin group, the hunter must go there and report it. [578] The dead prey must then be divided. Since, however, there are some unpaired organs, fighting and killing easily arise concern- [627] ing them. Blood vengeance is practiced, but can be resolved through negotiation.

423 614 "Each kin group has a territory that has been inherited from ancient times. The territory is called Gao and might correspond to the German concept Gau [canton, district].

[361] "There are kin groups that are so far apart that a journey of several days lies between them. For example, the territory north of the Omuramba-Owambo near Kajus, where the manketti tree (Ricinodendrum bantaneni) occurs, belongs to a kin group that ordinarily lives over 1,000 [sic] kilometers away and comes there only when the oleaginous fruit is ripe.

"Kin groups with two hunting and gathering regions, come into being through the fusion of two kin groups that have intermarried for so long that fusion came about automatically.

769 614 "The graves of the ancestors are within the kin group's territory. They are marked by the large piles of stone placed on them. The ancestors are regarded as the guardians of the kin group's

/259 cont./

342 are filled with grass. The door is a hole scarcely a meter high;
[354] immediately behind it the fire burns almost continuously, so that, at least for the European, crawling into the hut presents considerable difficulties. Since the Bushmen are often forced to
● [361] move their settlements because of the lack of veld food or because of the water conditions, they not infrequently content themselves with incomplete huts, which are not closed to form a full circle, but represent only a part, a segment of a hut, as it were, and give only scant protection against the sun.

For the rest, it is astonishing how hardened these practically
147 naked Bushmen are against the cold of the night which during the cold season is very sharp -- not infrequently below 0^{0} [centigrade].
[513] Unclothed except for the loincloth, they calmly go to sleep on the cold ground near a small fire, exposed to the icy night air, a thought that gives chills to Europeans, who are unable to sleep without three woolen blankets on such nights.

Concerning the much discussed racial position of the Bush-
144 men, I have already remarked above -- at least concerning the Heikum and Kung -- that their descent from the Hottentots, as is frequently asserted, seems doubtful to me. The Bushmen's smaller size, of course, can be accounted for by the debilitation of the race through centuries-long unfavorable living conditions. What argues against the notion of racial affinity, however, is the anthropological fact that steatopygia is not to be found among
197 the Heikum and Kung women, /260/ and, in addition, the language is totally different.

I attempted to collect a sample of the vocabulary and some grammatical characteristics of the language of the Heikum on the Omatako and of the Kung in the Kaukau Veld, which I present below. In doing this, it became evident that the languages of the Heikum and Kung are merely dialectically differentiated, while they seem to have almost no relationship to the Nama language. The click sounds, to be sure, are almost the same as
[194] those in the Hottentot language; hence, / designates the dental
[104] click, // the lateral click, ! the cerebral [retroflex] click, and ≠ the palatal click. By ⋮ I designate the sharp opening of the glottis in speaking the initial vowel, which frequently occurs between a consonant and a vowel or between two vowels of the same word, and which does not occur in this fashion in the Nama.

6:Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1957 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

dangerous.' When they do they use the word *n/oi*. It is a word for gentle rain, and also a respect word. They use it for male rain when they are afraid of it and avoid its real name, */gs /go*.

The rains of the western Kalahari are local, falling from clouds which the winds herd. They may fill one pan and miss another. Laurence Marshall spent one whole night, tentless, in a drenching downpour, to find in the morning that a mile away no rain had fallen. But by and large the rains are sufficient in quantity and well enough dispersed to fill most of the water-holes, pans, and hollow trees, and to revive the growing things, so that the autumn months, which follow the rains, are good—the best of the year. Then the /Kung may travel anywhere within their territories to hunt and gather the fresh veldkos. The rains are life-giving.

Winter is the season of dryness. It is also the season of burning sun in the cloudless sky by day and freezing cold when the sun sets. Bitter winds catch up the sparks of the fires at night and whirl them in blazing streaks into the darkness. If water is left in an open bowl, it may be ice in the morning. By mid-winter, July, there has been no rain for three or four months. The pans and small water-holes are dry. Though there are still foods to be gathered, like the mangetti nuts in the northern forest, there is no water on the route, nor in the white sand dunes where the mangetti[illegible]y, and the people cannot carry enough in their ostrich-egg shells to go to the [illegible]gettis and return. In 7,500 square miles of the interior of the region around Nyae Nyae, there are only five water-holes which do not dry up in the winter and spring. The /Kung bands must gather around whatever permanent water-hole they belong to and restrict their hunting and gathering trips to conform one way or another to the problem of water. This region, incidentally, does not abound in tsama melons and, though there are succulent so-called 'water' roots to be found, they seem not to be sufficient to support whole bands for long. The Nyae Nyae bands, it appears, cannot, or at least do not, base themselves for long periods away from their water-holes.

The spring months which follow the dry months of winter are the dangerous months. The sun is scorching. Fruits and leaves shrivel; the edible roots, stirred by the few tantalizing drops of the little rains, or just because it is spring, give up their juices to the first new shoots and are dry and bitter to eat. The people longingly await the rains, saying it is the sun which dries the water-holes and the plant foods. The /Kung of this region use one word for both sun and dryness, */kaw*, and say the sun is death-giving.

In their beliefs about *n/ow*,[1] which they think influences the weather, as this paper will describe, they make an antithesis between rain and cold. This seems paradoxical when one experiences the devastating heat of the sun in September, October, and November, but the resolution of the paradox may lie in the fact that the hardships of the dry seasons begin with the rainless winter months and their bitterly cold nights, so that sun, dryness, cold and want become a complex which is in antithesis to rain and plenty. *N/ow* is called 'bad' if it brings cold, 'good' if it brings rain.

Mrs. Hoernlé[2] records a Hottentot belief called */naw*. The word appears to be

[1] We spell the /Kung word *n/ow* in this way because it rhymes with 'how'. We wish to distinguish it from another /Kung word, */naw*, which it closely resembles, but which has a slightly shorter, more closed sound. */Naw* means 'old man', according to Miss Bleek's *Bushman Dictionary*. We heard it used as a term of respect in addressing old men.

[2] Hoernlé, Agnes W., 'Certain Rites of Transition and the Conception of */naw* among the Hottentots', *Harvard African Studies*, ii (1918), pp. 75–77.

8: Fourie D-5 (ca. 1920) 1928
FX10 Bushmen FX10

622 At the head of each group is a big man or chief. Though usually considered to be a chief in name only and without any authority over the members of the group, he in fact does exercise considerable influence in the life of the community because in him are vested certain functions, the performance of which are of vital importance to the welfare of his people. [423] The family area with its food and water supply, as well as the fire, are all looked upon as belonging to him. Among the tribes of the Kalahari he is succeeded by a son or, failing such, 621 by the nearest male relative.) Among the *Hei-//om*, on the [582 other hand, the eldest sister's eldest son succeeds to the 591] chieftainship. Marriage in the group being exogamous and patrilocal, the rest of the group consists of male relatives of the chief with their wives and families. The whole group lives in a common werft or encampment which is laid out on a definite plan. 361 The huts of the married families are placed about 15 to 20 feet apart and arranged in the form of an irregular circle 60 to 80 yards in diameter. Among the [184] *Hei-//om* the hut of the chief is always placed in the east, facing, but at some distance away from, the others. In the Kalahari it may occupy any part of the circle. At or near the middle of the werft is situated a large tree which is reserved as the meeting place for the men and for ceremonial [562] and other purposes. Among some tribes women are entirely forbidden to approach it or to join the men when gathered underneath it. Within the circle adolescent young girls and [882 boys are accommodated in separate huts some distance away 342] from each other. Among the more primitive groups the boys are not provided with a hut, but sleep under the tree in the centre. Mature nubile young women either remain in the young girls' hut or occupy huts next to those of their parents, but inside the circle. Old widows and widowers, as also [589] visitors, live outside the circle of the married people. The dancing place is situated within the circle.

184 Huts vary considerably in size and shape among the various 342 tribes. In its most primitive form the hut is four to five feet in height and of very simple design, consisting merely of a semi-circular shelter of branches planted into the ground and covered with grass. Hut-making is the work of women, and a [462] husband does not interfere with his wife's building operations. When it becomes necessary to desert an old camp and establish 166 a new one the site for the latter is selected by the chief, who 342 deposits his household and other effects on the place on which [622] his own hut is to be erected. After the other members have done likewise he proceeds to light a new fire by means of firesticks. Brands from the fire of the old werft may not be used for this purpose. From the fire kindled by him each family then lights its own, after which the women may begin with the building of the huts.

361 In each group area the permanent encampment is situated [312] in the vicinity of the main water supply. When the area is of considerable extent the group, however, moves about from one place to another according to the season and the

distribution of the rainfall upon which it is mainly dependent for its food supply.

The Group Fire.

All fire is the property of the chief. The first fire kindled by him is regarded as essential to the welfare of the community. Every man and woman knows how to use the firesticks, but will not, and may not, light a fire with them in the werft as fire-making is a matter of serious import and the chief is the only person who is able to bring forth from it the magic properties which bring health and happiness and ward off evil and misfortune. The first fire kindled in a new camp is never allowed to die out. As an illustration of this may be cited the practice as it exists among the *Hei-//om* of the Etosha Pan. When among the latter it becomes necessary to move camp, as for example, after a death has taken place, the whole community take up all their goods and chattels and, led by the *geikhoib* (chief), set off in search for a new site to be selected by the latter. Having found a suitable one he places his belongings on the spot on which his own hut is to be erected. His followers, passing on his left, take up suitable places for their huts in like manner. The chief then proceeds to the large tree (*/hei*s) in the centre and kindles a fire underneath it by means of the firedrill (*hei-doros*). Fire from the old encampment or any other source may not be used for this purpose. He next applies *//norab* and *dabas* to the fire by scraping the roots of these plants with his knife over it and, after having done so, lights his pipe with it. This first fire or fire under the tree (*hei-/ais*) is next used by his wife (*gei-khois*) for lighting the fire in front of his hut (*/ou-ais*). The fire is now free for use by the members of the whole group. The men may come and light their pipes from the *hei-/ais* and the women may fetch fire from the */ou-/ais* for kindling their own. Thereafter the latter may proceed with the erection of the huts. Should the *hei-/ais* go out, as sometimes happens during the absence of the *gei-khoib*, it may not be lit except by the latter himself. This he does with fire from the */ou-/ais*. The */ou-/ais* is attended to by the *gei-khois* and under normal circumstances is never allowed to die. A large log is always placed upon it before the chief and his wife will leave camp for any length of time. Should it go out during their absence and the other fires remain burning he, and only he, may kindle it with fire from the *hei-/ais* or from the other huts. In the unlikely event of all the fires having become extinguished during the absence of the inhabitants, no fires may be kindled until the return of the *gei-khoib*. If in such an eventuality he has gone far and is not expected to be home soon, his people will approach a neighbouring *gei-khoib* with whom they are on friendly terms and the latter will come and make a fire under the */hei*s with the *hei-doros*. On the return of their own chief, however, all the fires will be put out and a new */ou-/ais* kindled by him by means of the hei-doros.

372 *hei-doros*. The new *!ou-/ais* now serves to supply the other members of the group. At times it may happen that all the members of the community may not be living in the *//gāus* (camp), but in some outside werft. This is usually the case only in times of drought when the game have moved far afield and great difficulty is being experienced in obtaining veldkos.

372 Further, people driven out by another group and seeking protection are sometimes allowed to live some distance away from the *//gāus*. Such communities are not allowed to make their own fire or to obtain it from any other source, but the *!ou-/ais* of the *gei-khoib* in whose territory they are living.

372 Persistent ill-health among the members of the community or difficulty in obtaining veldkos or want of luck in the chase may cause the *gei-khoib*, either of his own accord or after consultation with his people, to proclaim that it is necessary to make a new fire. In such an event all fires, including the *!ou-/ais* are extinguished by being covered over with ashes. The *gei-khoib* at the same time notifies all outside camps of his decision and the latter likewise extinguish their fires. He then kindles a new *!ou-/ais* in front of his hut with the hei-doros and applies *norab* and *dabas* in the manner described above. The new fire is not made on the same spot as the old fire, but a few feet away from the place on which it had been.

184 The custom of kindling and maintaining a perpetual fire is 372 met with among all the organised primitive groups. Want of space and time does not permit, however, of a detailed account being given of the superstitions which have gathered about this custom among the various tribes.

Family Life

593 Each family within the group occupies its own hut. Children sleep with their parents until they are strong enough to go about by themselves, when the boys join the others under the tree and the girls take up residence in the hut for unmarried girls.

512 The women rise early, light the fire and prepare the food for the morning meal which usually consists of veldkos. After having eaten, the men go out visiting or hunting or engage in some other occupation such as preparing skins, weapons, etc. The women accompany each other in search of veldkos and go out soon after the men have left. When food is obtainable at no great distance they are usually back in camp towards midday. When they have to go far they may not reach home until late in the afternoon. Wood is collected on their way back. Immediately after their return they proceed to prepare food, the younger married women and young girls in the meantime fetching water. The food is ready by the time the men arrive in the evening and the latter are able to partake of it without delay.

462 There is a sharp division of labour between the men and women of the group. The former do the hunting and snaring of game, prepare the weapons, skins for clothing, snares, fire-

The Bushmen are one of the most primitive peoples living on earth. Although most of their groups own some metal objects, Bushmen do not smelt or forge metal, but get it in trade from their Bantu neighbors. They use soft metal in the making of a few tools such as knives, arrowheads, and little axes, cold-hammering the metal into shape themselves. Bushmen make the other tools they use from wood and bone, grass and fiber, the things of the veld. They dig roots and pick berries to eat because they have no crops. The desert is too dry for anything but desert plants to grow naturally, and Bushmen, who quickly consume all the wild food available in one place, cannot stay anywhere long enough to tend crops or wait for them to grow.

There is not enough water to water livestock, and for this reason Bushmen have no domestic animals. Most of their groups do not even have dogs. Instead of herding, Bushmen hunt wild antelope with tiny arrows, sometimes made of soft, traded metal, sometimes made of bone, and poisoned with a terrible poison extracted from a certain grub, a poison which affects the nervous system of a creature and which is so deadly that an antelope shot early in the morning with a single arrow well placed in the body dies within the day. Hunting is very difficult, for travel in the veld is thirsty and rigorous and the antelope are clever, but as often as not the Bushmen hunters shoot one and then they use it all. Most of the meat is dried to preserve it, causing it to last at least a few weeks, but sooner or later every last bite of it is eaten, even the mucous lining of the nostrils and the gristle inside the ears. They sometimes eat the hide, sometimes work it into leather to use for clothing, and if the antelope bones are not all cracked for the marrow, pieces are worked into arrow points to shoot another antelope.

In order to live as they do, Bushmen must travel through

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

105 361 the veld, changing their abode every few days in search of food. Because of their way of life, they do not need villages to live in, so they rarely bother to build strong scherms, making small domes of grass for themselves instead, just a little shade for their heads, grass which the wind soon blows away. Sometimes they do not even bother with this, but push little sticks into the ground to mark their places. They sleep beside the sticks and arrange their few possessions around them, symbols of their homes.

105 361 823 [621] Although Bushmen are a roaming people and therefore seem to be homeless and vague about their country, each group of them has a very specific territory which that group alone may use, and they respect their boundaries rigidly. Each group also knows its own territory very well; although it may be several hundred square miles in area, the people who live there know every bush and stone, every convolution of the ground, and have usually named every place in it where a certain kind of veld food may grow, even if that place is only a few yards in diameter, or where there is only a patch of tall arrow grass or a bee tree, and in this way each group of people knows many hundred places by name. Even if you are traveling randomly with Bushmen and ask at any time on the journey for the name of the place where you happen to be standing, they will probably be able to tell you. They themselves always like to know exactly where they are.

105 621 The social structure of Bushmen is not complicated. They have no chiefs or kings, only headmen who in function are virtually indistinguishable from the people they lead, and sometimes a band will not even have a headman. A leader is not really necessary, however, because the Bushmen roam about together in small family bands rarely numbering more than twenty people. A band may consist of an old man and his wife, their daughters, the daughters' husbands, perhaps an

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

136 the great veld fires had burned away the dry grass farther in the north, causing new green grass to spring up, luring the antelope to come there. We saw fires very near us and we wondered if the Bushmen had followed the game to the north.

361 609 One day we came to a tiny, low forest where we decided to camp for the night. As we searched among the little trees for firewood, we came upon three scherms, three little huts, built by Bushmen and abandoned very recently. The ashes of the fires were still warm. The people who lived there had surely heard us and had run away, leaving many of their possessions behind. We found a pot, burned black from use, a few white beads, a quiver with arrows, and a digging-stick, which is a branch a few feet long with the bark peeled off and the twigs trimmed away, sharpened at one end and used by Bushmen as a spade to break the hard ground when they dig roots. We then found footprints made by the people when they had rushed off in all directions; and later, as we followed the tracks, we even found the prints of hands and knees where someone had crawled hastily across an open place.

411 412 415 301

609 The discovery of these huts made us very hopeful, as we had traveled much farther than we had expected. We felt confident that Gishe, who had been born near our very campsite, would be able to track the people and find them, or that they would be plagued by curiosity and finally visit us. They did not, however; nor did they come back for their possessions, nor was Gishe able to find them. He had been living on a farm for many years and was no longer an expert tracker; and after the night dew had fallen during the evening that we found the werf, the tracks were old.

Of course, it was useless for us to wander around the veld hoping to stumble upon fresh tracks, although we tried the following day without success. We also sent Gishe to look for

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

609 Gai on the hood to point the way. From his higher position he noticed the long horns of a gemsbok in the grass and he signaled for the jeep to stop. Then he, John, and Theunis, taking a rifle, slipped out of the jeep and ran off after it, bent over and crouched so low that only their backs showed, as the backs of animals would, gliding above the grass. The gemsbok saw them and ran away toward a patch of heavy bush in the plain, the great V of horns a crown over its head. The men ran after, standing now, and in an hour they came back to where Ukwane and I were waiting, lying on our stomachs under the jeep to be in shade, saying that they had killed it. We drove to the spot where the gemsbok, a female, lay and brought her with us, a present to offer the other Bushmen.

● 361 We drove for several hours and at last we came to a wide plain, grown over heavily with small trees of slender trunks, with a few short branches sprouting leaves, like fence posts. Gai directed us to one of the smaller trees in the center of the [237 276] plain and told us to stop. He climbed down and looked around over the veld, then bent and picked up a small pipe, a piece of the leg bone of an antelope. He asked us for a match, lit his pipe, and smoked it.

At last we noticed on the other side of the tree two shallow depressions scooped in the sand and lined with grass, like [518] the shallow, scooped nests of shore birds on a beach—the homes of the families, where the people could lie curled up [132] just below the surface of the plain to let the cold night wind which blows across the veld pass over them.

Other than the depressions, except for a small pile of brown, twisted bean shells, no sign would show that people lived there. Later we saw another scooped pit and a stick thrust upright in the ground beside it, right at our feet, which [4-23] was Gai's place; the stick was to mark the spot, although Gai

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Gikwe

could have found his shallow pit at any time of the day or night.

Nobody was there; everyone had run away. We sat down and waited while Gai put his hands to his mouth and shouted, trying to summon the people back again. When nobody came or even answered him, he flung his pipe to the ground and marched off to find them among the bushes, alternately shouting to his hidden relatives and muttering to himself, for they might be far away and the day was getting warm.

We sat in the middle ground between the depressions so that we wouldn't risk stepping on or crushing anybody's hidden things, for, without knowing it, a European can in a moment trample through a Bushman's cache, breaking the delicate bone or wooden objects, bending the reed arrows, or crushing eggshell beads. Also, among certain groups of Bushmen, every fire has a man's side and a woman's side, determined by the position of the fire as you face the doorway of the scherm, the man's side being on the right, the woman's on the left. If a man sits on the woman's side, or where a woman has been sitting, he will become impotent and will also lose his power to hunt, and if a woman sits where a man has been sitting, she will get a disease in her vagina. Something intangible, invisible, but dangerously powerful, remains on the ground. We did not know which side was which of this werf's fires, or even for sure where the fires were; we did not even know that the Gikwe had this custom, for we had learned it from Kung Bushmen, but we knew that if they did they would not welcome our contaminating their ground. We would have liked to look around, but the best thing we could do was to keep our big boots and our bodies away from their delicate, fragile, almost invisible community.

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FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

well as great loads of melons, all of which we offered again and again to carry for them, but because, they said, they might want to stop for the night or just refresh themselves along the way, they would not part with their bundles.

The place we went to was called Ai a ha'o; it was the pan where we had seen the lion. It took us almost all day to drive there, and shortly after we arrived Dasina and Kutera joined us, having traveled almost as fast as we. Those two old women must have walked at four or five miles an hour all the way, over veld so rough that the trucks couldn't go much faster.

Before dark, the Bushman women had built a werf, a clearing of grass for each family with a shallow pit to sleep in and a place for the fire, all four clearings under the branches of a single tree which would give them shade in the daytime. On the branches each person hung whatever there was to hang, quivers, skin bags, or aprons, and these things swung in the cold wind. The women gathered firewood and lit their fires, and Dasina asked Twikwe to stand on her stomach because she was tired from her long walk and wanted a massage. Before they went to sleep the men and the three young boys walked to our camp, about fifty feet away, to say good-night, but the women stayed at home because at night all Bushmen women stay at home. A woman does not even leave her fire to go to her neighbor's fire three feet away because people will say that she doesn't like to stay home; she speaks loudly to her neighbor instead. Bushmen are a rather conservative people, and they are very moral in that they keep their own rules.

The smoke in the west that Gai had seen when he roasted the tortoise intrigued him very much. Again and again he said that it was people's smoke, and one morning he said he wanted to go over to it, to look for the man who was Wita-

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GiKwe

574 621 857 do not meet very often, and when they do the children play together day and night. All the young boys were extremely happy to see each other and expressed their joy by starting their game at once, wasting neither time nor breath to say hello. Before the adults of the visiting band had set their bundles on the ground two little horses with their riders had run past, the riders trying to unseat each other.

574 621 361 They played all afternoon and into the evening while the adults went about the business of setting up a camp. I went to the new werf to watch and found that the women had stored away their belongings, stuffing some of their bundles among the tree roots, hanging others from the branches, and were now clearing grass, each woman clearing a small circle for her family. Soon five circles were formed, not quite touching, all sheltered by the branches and all in the space of a few square feet. I helped one woman pull grass, for she was clearing it tuft by tuft, pulling it up with her hands, and as I did this I felt something cold and firm in the grass I was holding, and, looking down, I saw that I was holding an asp. I dropped it, one of the Bushman men ran up to kill it, and one of the [20] women lifted it between her fingers and placed it in her kaross. Later it would be cooked and eaten by a child.

224 574 That same afternoon, some of the members of our expedition went hunting and shot a gemsbok, which was brought back to camp and given to Ukwane to divide. This was, perhaps, a great mistake on our part, for Ukwane gave the entire carcass to the newcomers except for the head, one foot, and a little of the liquid from the rumen, which he kept for his own people. Twikwe dug a pit in the veld and roasted the head in it, and that night, while the newcomers were still butchering, drying, and cooking their larger share, the mem-

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Kung

said to be ant lions which at night rise from the bottoms of their little traps of sand.

Since we had lived a year in Nyae Nyae we knew the round of the seasons, which Kung Bushmen say are six in number. We came there in July, in winter and the start of the drought, the coldest season. August was bitterly cold and also dry, but in September the air began to get warmer and heralded the next season, called "little winds before the rain," a season of whirlwinds, drought, and clouds of dust. In October, suddenly and presenting a startling sight, a thorn tree near our camp turned quite green and the heat began to be intense. This was the start of the springtime, the dryest, hottest time of all the year and a time of starvation, for the water in the waterholes gets very low until only a little remains on the bottoms and the wild roots push sap into their vines so that the vines turn green and sprout but the roots themselves are shriveled. This was the worst season of the year for the people. Before this, during the winter, the large extended band that we had gone to visit was separated into little family groups that were scattered through the veld, living at little waterholes that did not keep their water all year long. During the dry season the water in these waterholes vanished, causing the small family bands to gather at the last sure waterhole of the area, a waterhole called Gautscha, which was beside a huge flat pan called Gautscha Pan.

There was one rather large band that always lived at Gautscha and numbered some forty people, who divided themselves into sometimes three, sometimes four family groups. They thought themselves lucky to live there, for Gautscha was considered to be a sort of paradise, where the waterhole was cool and deep, and (it was said) game gathered at all times to lick the salt, for Gautscha was a salt pan. It was the salt that made Gautscha most desirable, because salt is

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Kung

greatly esteemed and is gathered from the crust of the pan in moist balls. Bushmen sprinkle the surface with water in order to roll up just the first layer where the salt lies. When the salt balls dry, Bushmen crumble them into their food, preferring salt to all sweet things and honey. Once when we asked some of the Gautscha people what they called themselves they replied with this phrase: "We are a salty people, who come from a salty place."

In the dry season, two hundred people came to Gautscha and lived in the bushes at the edge of the pan. This was an enormous number for any area to support, but all had indisputable rights to be there, for either their fathers had drunk at Gautscha or they had relatives whose fathers had; by the rather complicated system, any Bushman may drink water and gather veld food wherever his parents had a right to do so, or may live with either his parents, his brothers or sisters, or his wife at any place where the relative of his choice has rights. There was water but not much food at Gautscha, and all the people got thin and very hungry and sat around their fires at night with sweat pouring from their bodies but with nothing to eat; to make matters worse, one man coming for a visit proved to be ill and gave his disease to everyone. It was a disease that caused vomiting, high fevers, chest pains, and nosebleeds of great intensity—a woman whom I tried to cure bled all one morning with blood squirting from her nostrils, pouring down over her arms and hands and dripping from her elbows, making a dark pool on the ground. The disease struck all the people, from the youngest infants to the oldest grandparents, and all the people lay for days scattered all over the ground, too ill to move. We did everything we could, of course; we provided food and medicine, firewood and water, and took turns staying up all night to nurse the people. As it happened, everyone got better within fourteen

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731 days, although not all were completely cured; and many, feeling that their luck was very bad at Gautscha, decided to take
361 their chances at other places in the veld where, although there was no water, there were watery roots that could be scraped for moisture. One day many of the people walked away in single file, taking their belongings and carrying on their backs their relatives still too sick to travel, leaving Gautscha Pan deserted except for the three small family bands who made their permanent home there.

764 One day when we were traveling in the veld about twenty
888 miles from Gautscha we came upon an old man lying on his face on the sand in an open place. He was a member of one of the bands at Gautscha that tried to escape bad luck, and, thinking he was hurt, we stopped at once. But he was not hurt; when we came near him he did not get up, but turned his face away from us and lay as if dazed, pressing one hand to his forehead. We knew him; he was the only Bushman of any nation we had ever met or even heard of who had never
[562 married, this because Bushman men must shoot a buck and
881 undergo initiation before they can marry, which he had never
162] done. Instead he lived with his sister, who took care of him and provided him with food, and who had been very ill during the plague at Gautscha. As we looked at him the headman of that band stepped out of the bushes and told us that the old man was not ill but grieving for his sister, who lay dead in a grove of thorn trees a little way beyond. The old man, who had been alone with his sister when she died, had been too weak from the illness to bury her, and had only been able to hide her body under a pile of stones. When the other members of the band had returned to the grove after a day or so of veld food-gathering, it had been too late, too dangerous because of the now roaming spirit, for them to assist

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the old man with a funeral, and they had had to abandon his sister's body as it was.

The headman lifted the old man from the ground and we saw that he had not been weeping but had only been lying inert and helpless, powerless now to keep himself erect. On our truck he lay just where we put him, motionless, prone, all the way back. We passed the grove where his sister lay, a grove of high white trees with red beans on their branches, and the old man did not turn his head to look.

After that, the situation for the people who remained at Gautscha got better because the summer came. Great cloud-banks like mountains formed at the horizon, dispersed themselves in brown haze, and formed again, getting larger day by day. Some of the bands who had left Gautscha began to return and once again the countryside was populous, the air filled with the murmur of voices and the smell of smoke from the many fires. Some of the men went hunting and shot a giraffe, so there was lots of meat for a while.

One day some of us went to a place called Kubi Pan to see a cheetah that was supposed to live there, but instead we saw a flock of guinea fowl walking along in single file as people do, raising a cloud of dust. Two of them began to fight because it was their mating season. When we got to Kubi it was evening and the clouds on the horizon were very thick, and just when the sun set into them the full moon rose on the other side, causing a balance of the two great bodies over the earth.

It seemed to be an auspicious night. On the way home we felt something electric in the air and when we got to Gautscha the moon had risen high and pale in the clouds and we found that the Bushmen were dancing the rain dance. Everyone was there, the women all singing and the men wheeling

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that the great trains dragging hampered its mating, would twist and thrash and struggle, squeezing the wings between its thorax and abdomen, which did break off the wings but left the stubs. More and more ants were flying to the light and their circles were growing bigger and bigger until we couldn't move without stepping on them, but the women, getting more excited and moving very quickly, as if responding to the pace and the excitement of the ants, scooped them up and ate them as fast as they landed, spitting out the silver wings as one would spit out chaff. Over our heads a few night birds and many bats were flying, catching and eating the ants before they reached the ground, and around our feet huge pink hunting-spiders rushed in and out of the swarm, dragging the ants from their acts of copulation and carrying them away to eat them in the dark.

Before long the flight had ended. Only a few late-coming ants bumped against the light, the night birds and bats were gone, and the spiders had run away. Nothing was left but the white wings like petals all over the ground and the wings that were caught in people's throats or stuck to their faces. The women, quite composed now, brushed themselves off, and one of them sang a song:

Gurico gum, ah
Ah, ah.

I noticed that each woman had managed to save a little bag or vegetable husk full of ants for her husband. These they put away.

That was in the late spring, a fertile season full of promise, and when it was over the best season of the year began, called the Veld Food Season, which starts some time in March. The big rains have ended, the air is warm but not hot, the veld is filled with water, game, fruit, roots, and

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green-leafed vegetables, and sometimes many of the people of the large extended bands come together to live, to hold important ceremonies which require many people, and to enjoy each other's company. Sometimes they separate into very small bands because they can now go anywhere they wish, each family going to the part of the veld where the type of food grows that the family most enjoys. There is water everywhere, in small seasonal waterholes, in shallow salt pans, in hollow trees, and the people thrive and grow quite fat. One of their favorite foods, one that grows in great abundance at this season, is a ground nut called *tsi*, which grows on a trailing vine and is so fat that if you leave a kernel of it on a piece of paper it will leave a greasy stain. Tsi is regarded by the Kung Bushmen as a very powerful food, one of the powerful veld foods in which there is a special essence, something mysterious and magic which gives them a life force all their own so that it would be dangerous to eat them during the year if this life force were not first subdued or not first integrated with the life force of the people. These foods are the mainstays of the Bushmen's diet, and are fat; and every year people in their child-bearing years, when they consider themselves subject to harm, protect themselves against these foods by a ritual act.

The act of protection is called *choa*, and it is interesting because it differs from the protective rituals performed by agricultural peoples to save their crops or animals from harm, or to cause their increase. The Bushmen choa themselves not to protect their fertility, for decrease in the number of children is not a problem to them, but to make sure that they, the young adults and mainstays of the community, will not get thin and starve.

Those whom Bushmen call "old people," adults who have had three children, are expected to protect themselves and also to protect young people of the same sex.

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accumulating dust had turned him black. When the rains came that year he had scrubbed himself with sand and water and had turned paler than the palest gold. No one had recognized him for a minute and then people had made fun of him, so he had let his coating accumulate again.

That night the old man, Lazy Kwi's father-in-law, decided that his band would move with us to Nama, a pan near Gautscha Pan, for he and Lazy Kwi believed that if we went there they could help us find more bands of Bushmen whom we had known. No one, he said, was living at Gautscha this season and the people who belonged there were scattered through the veld because the rains had been so good that there was food and water everywhere. We said that we would leave in the morning to begin the search, but the old man hesitated to agree and finally told us that in the morning he had planned to rob a bee tree, but after that he would be free to go. As he had hoped, the following morning we went with him on his trip for wild honey.

The bee tree was in a little forest about two miles from Gam, a forest filled with tiny yellow leaves and tiny seed pods blowing from the trees and scattered all through the grass, which in places had been plowed up by a wild pig rooting for bulbs. Because it was early in the morning and frosty, turtle doves were singing and the clear air was filled with their voices. Honey is always gathered at the coldest time of day, for then the bees are dull and stupid and it takes them a long time to collect their wits. The old man and Lazy Kwi cleared some grass and lit a tiny fire; then, squatting beside it, they warmed their hands, waiting for it to burn well, for they would use its smoke to numb the bees. Lazy Kwi's wife and her sister had come too; they did not join the men by the fire but walked off in the bush, gathering sour berries for their breakfast. The women in their wanderings found a hollow

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she used when she was angry, a cat growling, and would be affectionate to Toma and her sons. Very often, when she was happy, she would dance a light, short dance to a song that she sang herself.

Tu had borne four children, four sons, to Toma, but the first two sons had died. One of these had died at birth, "had died in the veld without a name," said Toma. The oldest living children, born after the others were dead, were a boy of about eight years old and a boy of five. While we were there in 1953, Tu bore her first daughter, a strawberry of a baby who was named for two people—named first for Toma's sister, but also Norna for my mother; her name is Lorna, but Bushmen have trouble with the *l*. In order to fit us into their society, the Bushmen had given us names and niches in the kinship of Toma's family. My father was named for Toma's father, my mother was named for Toma's mother, my brother was named Toma for Toma, and I was called Dikai for Tu's sister. Toma therefore named his daughter for the person who was named for his mother—not at all unusual, as it often happens that a child may bear the names of two of its relations.

Now, hoping to find Toma once again, we started the truck motors, fired a rifle, called and called, in case he might be living far from the water, but no sound came from the great veld to answer us and we began to search in the bush around the pan for signs that might show us where he was. We found two empty scherms built in the rainy season, their grass thatches gray with weather, their little piles of fire ashes sunk into the ground, and near these scherms we found the skull of a bird and the shoulder blade of an antelope, all white, bleached, and dry. Farther on we saw a tree where the woven grass nests of weaver birds were hanging empty, swinging

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with the wind, which made us think of the empty scherms, and still farther we found one more empty dwelling, the tiny grass nest of a mouse that hung on a bush, from a thorn.

We went around and around the pan in three huge circles, occasionally calling Toma's name, and when at last we were sure that no one was there we went back to the pan and sat in the shade of some bushes to think. Lazy Kwi sat with his chin in his hands, gazing into the sunlit veld. He was sure, he said, that no one lived at Gautscha Pan, so there was no use going there. Toma and his family had not lived at Nama for a whole season and since wind and rain had erased all traces of their passing we could not tell where they had gone. Lazy Kwi thought for a long time and at last he said that he had heard from the Bantu people at Gam that Toma had been indentured by Bantu people at another cattle post called Kai Kai, near Gam, and had been set to work minding a herd of goats. Lazy Kwi had not believed that this could have happened, but now he said that it was possible and in that case Toma would have to live not far from Kai Kai, somewhere in the veld but not too far from water. And there was such a place, said Lazy Kwi, but in the east and far from Nama Pan.

It was early afternoon, so hot that even the insects of the veld were silent. We decided to leave at once in order to reach the waterhole that Lazy Kwi had mentioned before night. We put a little meat, some water, and our blankets in the jeep, and my brother and I, Lazy Kwi and Ledimo, the interpreter, got ready to go, leaving the others to make a camp.

Before we left, Lazy Kwi took leave of his family, then got his bag of tsi beans and baobab seeds from his wife and put a handful or two into another bag which he would take with him, leaving the larger share with her. When his little son saw what he was doing and realized that his father was preparing

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since that was all he remembered we went on again to the source of the first of the three fires.

It was there that we found Toma. He had been there all the time, only a few miles from where we had camped, and when he heard our jeep coming he watched us over the top of a bush before showing himself to see first who we were.

We saw him when he ran toward us. He was quite far off and we saw first his dark figure detach itself from the bush and run with long, swinging strides toward our jeep. He waved his arms and we knew at once that this, at last, was Toma. Before he reached us a second figure appeared from behind another bush and ran beside him, and we knew from the disjointed stride that this second man was Gao Big Feet, Toma's brother-in-law. We turned our jeep toward them and soon we met and the two men embraced us and laughed and said that they had known we would come back someday, and then they climbed in the jeep and took us to their werf, stopping first to get their spears and quivers, which they had left in the bushes, for no Bushman, no matter how excited, ever greets people with his weapons on his back because this might be taken as a sign that he was quarrelsome, looking for a fight.

Their werf was in a tiny thicket of thorn trees at the edge of the plain, screened in front by bushes, carefully concealed, but on a rise of ground where a man standing could easily scan the surrounding plain without being seen himself. There Toma and Gao Feet could observe the movements of the antelope that crossed the plains below them, waiting patient in the dappled shade of their trees' broad leaves as lions do. The two families stood in front of their bushes to meet us and they, too, embraced us and they all climbed in the jeep to do this, then climbed out again and stood back to see how we were.

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361 We got out and sat with them in their werf to talk before deciding what we would do next. Looking around, we saw that only the two families lived here, for there were only two sleeping-places, set, for the sake of a little privacy, on the opposite sides of one of the scrawny trees. The women had not built huts, but had scooped little hollows for themselves and their husbands which they had lined with soft grass bedding, and had put up two arching sticks at each of these hollows to mark the place where the door would be if a scherm had been there, for the Kung as well as the Gikwe need a sense of place. In fact, the Kung need it even more, for without their grass and marking-sticks the Kung feel homeless. Their sleeping hollows were like the soft grass nests of pheasants, hidden in the leaves.

276 576 The Bushmen all lit pipes and passed them—each pipe reached everybody, everybody shared and smoked, and the pipes circled slowly for an hour or more until the tobacco was gone. There was a brass pipe made of an old cartridge, a bone one, a horn one, and last of all a copper one that tasted very bad. The Bushmen cracked roasted tsi nuts and passed the fat little kernels around to each other, offering them on the palms of their hands. My brother told Toma that he had missed tsi because there was none in America.

609

"What?" said Toma. "No tsi? Why didn't you plant some?"

"The soil is a little strong for it," said John.

"So."

"But tsi is good."

"No good," said Toma sadly. "I used to be fat. Now I am thin." He stuck out his leg and slapped at it. "Where is my fat?" he said.

He did not seem to be thinner than he used to be, though; he had only a scar on his belly and a scar on his back where

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484 with their families on trips that would take them only hours if they were traveling alone. We stopped a fourth time in the middle of the vast plain, for John had seen a shattered ostrich egg on the ground and wanted to let the Bushmen gather it to make beads. Toma motioned him to drive on. The egg, he thought, belonged to a man named Crooked Kwi, who had left it there one season and would return for it someday soon. Toma had heard of this event from Crooked Kwi
[45] himself when they had seen each other last, and, observing that the shell fragments were gathered into a pile, he supposed that this must be the very egg that Crooked Kwi had mentioned. It was just where Crooked Kwi had said it would be, too.

361 We left the eggshells behind in the immense plain and went on our way toward the eastern rim. When we got there we found the rest of Gao Feet's family—his older and uglier first wife, his old mother-in-law, his first wife's daughter, and his daughter's husband, none other than Crooked Kwi himself. These people were living in a most beautiful glade of thorn bushes that were growing thickly together among tall trees, their branches arching just over people's heads. A fire had cleared out all the grass and leaves, leaving just the brown earth and the gray lace of branches; the people were brown and their things were brown and white and the ashes of their fires were gray in the little hollows on the ground, for these people, too, had built no scherms. Tu got right out of the
[25] jeep and went straight to a fire, where she began to crack some of her tsi nuts between a stick and a stone.

608 The rest of us exchanged greetings and the old woman,
551 Dikai's mother, embraced me. "You are my daughter. I bore you," she said. When I had first come to Gautscha Pan I had been named Dikai for her daughter, and among the Kung one is strongly identified with the person one is named for; as the

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574 by now, cranky from the long ride; the bundles of tsi were unloaded, the bundles of belongings, and Tu's grass bed. Lazy
● 361 Kwi went off to find his wife and family, but the others, all
574 Toma's people, looked around for a place to live and finally chose a tall tree, where they dropped their bundles and began to clear grass. In a very short time the werf was ready, fires were lit, tsi was roasting, and several of the Bushmen who had watched us come had gathered there to see if they should have a share of the tsi. Of course everybody got some and then sat down to eat it, burying the nuts in the hot ashes and scooping them out again with a stick when they were done.
[253 576] Dikai gave some tsi to me and said that I could use her fire, a courtesy, so I buried the nuts in the ashes and when I thought they were done I poked for them with a stick but I couldn't find them. Pretty soon they began to explode with loud reports and puffs of gray ashes which showed where they were, but of course then it was too late. You might as well throw them away if you forget where they are, the Bushmen say.

252 Some of the newcomers were eating giraffe hide, roasting great pieces of it, dried and thick and curling; they passed chunks of it around and it looked like the soles of shoes, all that remained of a giraffe hunted long ago. When it was roasted the people put it in a wooden mortar and pounded it into powder, and then licked the powder off their palms. Again, Dikai gave some to me and I found that it was salty and not unpleasant, tasting like bacon.

201 576 Gao Feet plucked my elbow and when I turned to him he pointed at Dikai, sitting on the other side of the fire. He had pointed his lips at her, pushing his lips forward and gesturing with his chin because Bushmen think it is rude to point with the finger. "She wants to tell you what is in her heart," he
609 said. I looked at Dikai and she passed her hand over her two sons' eyes, first Little Gashe, then Little Dabe, as they slept

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521 lifted her head and her face showed in the firelight; her eyes shone quite yellow and she looked dangerous, like a leopard, as she glared in the direction of his voice.

361 342 On my way home I passed Lazy Kwi's house, which his wife had started in his absence, and as she had planned a large scherm and had already built the framework, many large branches stuck upright in the ground, but had not yet covered it with grass, I could see Lazy Kwi inside. He was between me and his fire, and in silhouette against the red light he looked like a creature in a cage, for he was peering through the lattice of branches to see who was passing by. I stopped 252 to show who I was, and noticed a bird roasting by his fire, a little duck which must have been snared by Lazy Kwi's old father-in-law. It was plucked and trussed and tied to a stick which was pushed into the ground so that the duck hung over the coals. It looked about done to me, so I asked Lazy Kwi, who was obviously alone with it, awake only to tend it, if it wasn't ready, and Lazy Kwi looked first at me, then at the 805 821 duck, then up at the sky, and shook his head. He was timing it by a star, he explained, and the star had risen but wasn't high enough yet, so I said good-night and went home and left him in his lattice; and just before I went to sleep I heard great shouts of laughter, for Toma had found someone who hadn't heard the lion story and was telling it again.

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young boys began to speak sounds that were for all the world like the sounds of English, with flat, almost nasal tones, perfect in cadence and inflection, and the people laughed again.

Because it was getting close to noon and the sun, now only veiled by the smoke, was burning over our heads, we decided to start our search for Short Kwi. After Toma, Toma's son, Gao Fect, and Lazy Kwi decided to go with us and the others decided to stay at home, we got on the truck and drove away, lurching over the stones at the edge of camp and out to the wild veld, to the west, where the soft wind was blowing and the horizon seemed dim because of the smoke. Ledimo, the interpreter, came too, and my brother and myself, and that night we slept in the veld, not even bothering to build a fire, but eating a few handfuls of cold food and sleeping in our blankets around the truck. The following afternoon we reached the werf of Short Kwi and his people. This werf, too, was hidden in the bushes and if the men of the band hadn't come out into the plain to meet us we might have gone by it, for Toma himself hadn't known exactly where it was. They came out because they knew it would be us they were meeting, for, they explained later, the European farmers couldn't possibly have found them there.

Six men and several young boys suddenly stepped from the bushes and appeared in front of our truck, all of them brown and naked and waving wildly to us, and the truck stopped so fast that those of us on top were nearly thrown off, and we all climbed down to greet them.

Three of the men were brothers, the brothers-in-law of Short Kwi, for their old mother had a strong hold on her family and kept them all beside her. Her sons and her daughters all lived with her; the sons at least might have been expected to live with the families of their wives, but they had never left her and they were here with her now. They stood

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

together in front of the truck and when we climbed down they embraced us.

We went on toward the werf with these men and boys clinging to the sides of the truck and laughing loudly at those among them who were raked by thorn branches that the truck drove through, and at the edge of the werf we saw the women standing all together, waving and calling to us, and we stopped again and they too embraced us and kissed me, and the little children gravely shook my hand.

Short Kwi's mother-in-law was there with a wide and toothless smile, her face all wrinkled like a little shriveled pear, and many other people, among them the old man who had never shot a buck and whose sister had died in the forest; he now was nobody's close relative and we noticed he had lost an eye and seemed even more malevolent and sad. He greeted us distantly, but the others were enthusiastic. The little children tried to climb on me and finally someone put a baby in my arms. The baby bit me, but he meant me no harm, for when he bit I felt the sharp edge of a new tooth coming, which probably itched.

We passed through the bushes and came into the werf, where the people had obviously been living for a long time, judging by the size of the ash heaps at the fires and the depth of the nests that people had dug for themselves. Looking around, it came to us that many people whom we had expected to see were not there, Short Kwi for one, and his wife. When we asked for them, Short Kwi's brother-in-law said that he would take us to see him presently. When we asked for the others who were missing—among them the man with two wives named Kushe and two daughters named Xama—we were told that these people had all been taken by the farmers and had never been seen again. We were very sad to hear it, for many of them were too old to have to do the heavy

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

happy. She was only ten, but already she had lost her childish belly, although her breasts had not yet begun to grow.

Now everyone was in the werf and people had begun to go back to their fires, leaving Short Kwi alone. When most people were gone, Short Kwi's brother-in-law squatted beside him and, taking his injured leg, began laboriously to help him move toward the veld, toward a little pathway that we had not noticed before. Short Kwi's wife had cleared the path; it led to a place in the veld where Short Kwi could urinate, and slowly, painfully, Short Kwi and his brother-in-law moved down it, the brother-in-law duckwalking, carrying the bad leg while Short Kwi—he who once could run great elands down—edged himself forward on his buttocks, using his hands to brace himself and his good leg to pull himself along.

We were not at his fire when he got back, but we could see him through the trees, inching, and then, when Short Kwi was alone with his wife and daughter, we could watch him sitting by his fire, looking idly around. He was like a wild goose with pinioned wings, squatting there before his fire, watching the sky, the veld, and other people come and go.

Those of us from Nama made a camp apart from the werf, through long grass as high as our chests, inside a little glade of thorn trees. We cleared some of the grass and built a fire, and even then the Bushmen could not stop talking about Short Kwi, although they tried to change the subject; they spoke of him creeping along on his buttocks, even this impossible without someone to help, and all because he had failed to notice an adder that was waiting in his path. Of course, the Bushmen said, he was lucky to be alive. I felt that he was luckier than they supposed, because of his wife, that quiet, gracious, gentle, pretty woman, and his grave little daughter, the image of her mother. The people felt, said

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

That was beautiful, the sun, and there was no sound as it 133
went down except the sound of doves calling among the trees on the far bank, whirring, cooing, a call that was pulsing and thick, urgent, throbbing, rising in intensity as the sun got dimmer, reaching a peak as the sun disappeared. It was as though they had brought it down, and when it was gone there was no sound at all; the silence was complete.

Gautscha Pan was more than a mile square and we, Europeans and Bushmen alike, held our breath with the majesty of it, its great solitude, the great drama of sunset going on reflected in its water for no eyes to look at; and when the sun was down and the colors of the veld were dull and dark we started home, but that was an impressive last look at a place and the last I ever saw of Gautscha Pan.

In the morning our trucks were packed and ready. We were 609
not happy to leave and the Bushmen were not happy to have us go. We gave them presents of all kinds, presents of pipes, of knives, of beads, of clothing, of cornmeal and tobacco; and all this pleased them, but Dikai cried when we said good-by and asked me if I would ever come back. I said that I hoped so and she kissed me and I felt wet tears on her face.

The people who had come from Gam wanted to ride a 361 ●
little way back with us to a mangetti forest, and we were glad to have them, but the others, Toma and his band, Gao Feet and his family, wanted to return to the tsi fields where we had found them, the veld food at Nama being almost gone, and before we left they had their bundles packed and were ready to go; as our trucks moved away they waved good-by and before we were out of sight we looked back and saw their small groups going in every direction, scattering to the four winds. When we reached the mangetti forest the others climbed

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

down, helping the children; Lazy Kwi and his wife were with them and they stood by the truck until we left and even then, when we had driven on, they were still looking at us and Lazy Kwi watched us out of sight. I saw him standing among the thorn trees, smaller and smaller in the distance, and just before he disappeared he waved.

That evening we camped beside an omaramba where the air was warm and pale, lit by the three-quarter moon; the wind made the dry leaves of a mangetti tree over our heads tap together and before we went to sleep we heard a leopard coughing far away, then growling nearer, a rattle, a rumble of a growl. In the morning we got up long before dawn because of a veld fire that someone had seen coming toward us; it made a huge red light in the black sky, like the open doors of an inferno, but as the dawn winds lifted it blew back on itself and went out. The sky slowly got gray, then pale rose, and then, hundreds of miles away, the great sun lifted from the veld's horizon and with the light we found the leopard's footprints which he had left as he had walked around us, in two great circles, as though he had cast a spell.

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[p. 2]

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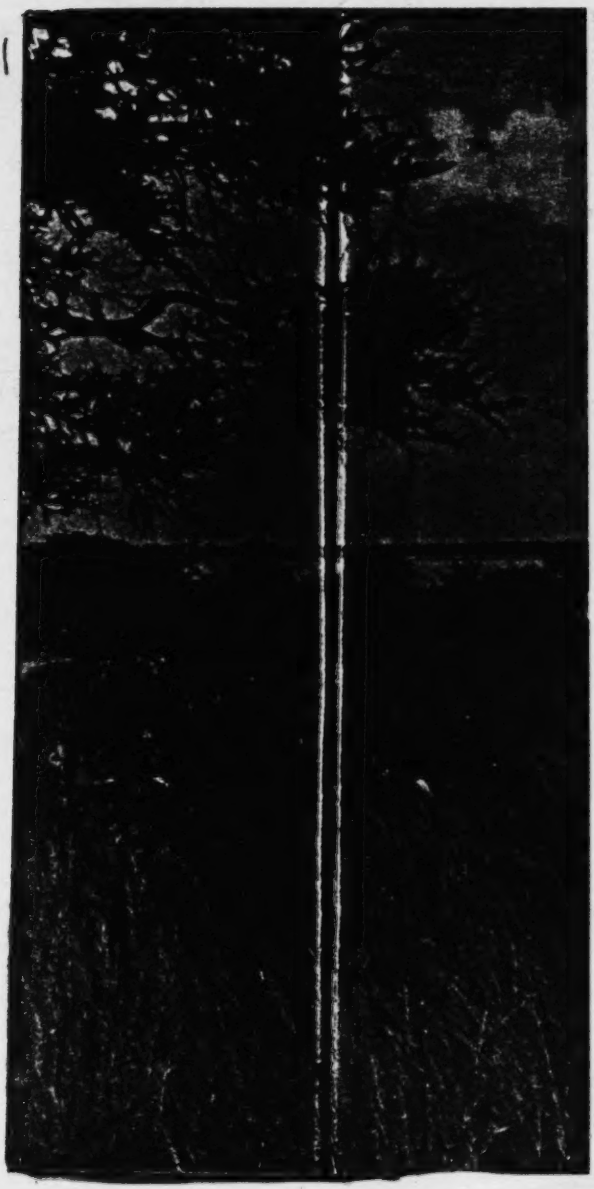

!Kung bang's camp, *left*, is set up in shelter of overhanging trees. The thousand !Kung in this area are divided into twenty-eight such nomadic bands.

[p.3]

11: Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1958 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

WOMEN OF WERFT gather children and possessions in preparation for march to a new campsite. A band can travel about ten miles a day, gathering food as it goes. The !Kung move in annual patterns: staying near waterholes in dry winter, visiting *mangetti* forests in moist summer, and *tsi* areas in fall.

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[P.39]

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DELOUSING is a courtesy among kinsmen: the salty-tasting lice are eaten.

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There are about 1,000 !Kung—gathered into 28 bands—who build their ephemeral camps, or *werft*'s, separately in an area of 10,000 square miles. The houses in the *werft*'s are of grass, pressed over a framework of sticks, making small quarter-shells, with their backs to the prevailing wind. Gossamer things, made of the same grass that sways and crowds against their doors, they are positioned in a loose pattern according to their occupants' kinship, and all are held—finally—by the headman, who builds his shelter under the tallest tree.

[622]

From a little distance, when the sound of voices is lost on the wind, one would not know a *werft* was near. The people never return to the same *werft*—preferring to build anew and saying it would not be safe from the spirits of the dead, or sanitary, to do so. Perhaps, also, they find it sad to see the little houses toppling, day by day, into the grass of the new year.

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AS A STARTING POINT, labor among the !Kung is divided between two basic subsistence activities—hunting game and gathering *veldkos*. Men hunt, because their bodies are better suited to the chase. Women gather, because they could not leave their children for the long periods of hunting that men both enjoy and endure.

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Women's work—the technology of gathering—is simple and adaptable: the tools are easily acquired, the methods quickly learned. The constant necessity to provide and the almost daily edge of effort slowly bends the

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THAT the !Kung live in small bands, flexible in their composition and spread widely over their Kalahari world, is owing in good part to their environment and to the technological means by which they cope with it. But the effect of the environment, carrying through the technology, penetrates the structure of the bands themselves and influences the way in which the !Kung distribute themselves around their resources.

[p. 71]

622 areas, baobab trees, and—most important—*mangetti* trees that hold
423 water in their trunks, and *tsi* areas. It is these "owned" features, and the direction from the waterhole in which they lie, that define a territory. Since, as we have seen, *mangetti*'s and *tsi* are the most important !Kung resources, they are the main determinants of a direction.

But animals are *not* owned. Neatly bounded sections of the countryside are *not* owned. A territory, therefore can best be defined as the combination of a permanent waterhole and a direction: the !Kung so define it by the word "side." One headman's territory is said to be on this "side."

361 JUST as the Kalahari's scant re-
621 sources of food and water are distributed in accordance with a geo-
622 graphical pattern, the !Kung bands are distributed in accordance with both a geographical and a social pattern. Natural resources are the focal points in the geographical pattern of band distribution: headmen are the focal points in the social pattern. In a sense, headmen tie together the two patterns, the concept of headmanship being the embodiment of a certain quantity of resources in a person around whom a band can take shape and operate. Because of their kin ties with a headman, the people living round him, clustering their *skerms* around his and moving with him over his territory, feel right in being where they are.

622 The headman receives no special
554 privileges. He is no more wealthy than other men. If he is a leader, he may assume responsibility and speak out. But, as headman, he need not speak, for headmanship is a silent office and while the headman lives—by his waterhole or out somewhere on his territory with his band—he serves his whole purpose.

423 Most of the permanent waterholes
312 have two !Kung bands associated with them, and the *tsi* areas are likewise shared by bands from the same and different waterholes. Such sharing may come about because two brothers (only one of whom may be the true headman) live together and feel they possess joint claims. It may come about through the passage of time, which confuses genealogies and lets claims, once tenuous, become firm through usage. The !Kung are a people of present tense, living—in their minds as well as with their

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HAPPY LIFE of children includes such moments as these: a laughing game of "pull-away," above.

423 bodies—from day to day. If the water-
312 holes were not shared, some bands would be without permanent water.

Not all !Kung territories are of
621 equal value in terms of food and
166 water. Some people have *mangetti* nuts, some have *tsi*, and some have
●361 both. There is mild wealth, and gentle poverty in *Nyae Nyae*. Territories also change in value year by year. The rains may fail in some parts of *Nyae Nyae*, and fall in others. In normal years, *mangetti*'s in the north may become available earlier in the season than those of the western forests. Because of the flexibility of band composition, the bands gathering *mangetti*'s in such a favored area are enlarged by people who would otherwise have to wait.

This is usually a temporary situation, the newcomers having more the status of guests than members of the bands. Often, whole bands—headman and all—will visit kin in this manner. During years of dessication, the fact that a person has several choices of bands in which to live becomes vital to him—he can move from a hopeless place to perhaps a better one.

By such means, balance works out between the desert's resources and the numbers and distribution of !Kung who exploit them. No one district or *mangetti* forest could support more than a limited number of people. Only certain people possess the necessary kinship qualifications to join a band. The flexibility of their

[P. 87]

11:Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1958
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

composition enables bands to swell during lean years, while the concept of association, through a headman, to a district and a territory provides for the distribution of people throughout the barren land.

If a band were confined strictly to one territory, or could use the resources of another territory only over the bodies of the band that lived there, there would be many less *Nyae Nyae* !Kung—perhaps none at all.

The !Kung give various reasons for their preference of the territory they consider home. For some, it is where they were born. For others, it is where they spent their youth. And for some, it is where they are waiting in their old age. Hunters say they must know their territories—every pan and stretch of bush, every unusual tree—and they say that to amass such knowledge takes years. An old man we met while he was visiting for a few days from the west, said that the weather was more gentle in Debera, the place where he lived, and that, moreover, "there are no stones in Debera ground."

Early one autumn morning, blue and sweet, when dawn air was still fragile on our faces, a close !Kung friend stood beside me in /Gautcha Territory, looking across a pan that still smiled with water despite the late season. It was the pan where he had come, as a young man, to live with his bride. We were quiet, waiting for the rising sun. "/Gautcha is beautiful," he said.

[p. 88]

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

LORNA MARSHALL · *The !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert*[1]

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION · The Bushmen live in those parts of the Kalahari Desert in southern Africa that lie in the British Bechuanaland Protectorate, in South West Africa, and in southeastern Angola. A few additional remnants of Bushman groups still exist in Northern Rhodesia and at Lake Chrissie in South Africa. In the past Bushmen had a much wider distribution.[2]

Many Bushmen live among, and some work for, the Bantu-speaking tribes in settlements where sufficient water resources have been developed to support cattle, and some Bushmen work for white farmers in the Ghanzi area of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and in South West Africa. However, many still live in small, independent, nomadic groups, widely dispersed in the vast areas of the desert.

It is very difficult to arrive at a precise population count of the Bushmen, but a recent estimate gathered from various contemporary sources (Tobias 1956) indicates that in 1955 there were 55,531 Bushmen.[3] These figures are higher than any previously propounded (cf. Schapera 1939) and come as a surprise to many.

The Bushmen are linked with the Hottentots, a southern African people who resemble them physically and with whom they have linguistic affiliations, but who are a pastoral people with a more complex social structure. Bushmen and Hottentots together are called the *Khoisan* peoples, a coined term combining the Hottentots' term for themselves (*Khoi*) and their name for the Bushmen (*San*). The Khoisan peoples have been referred to as a distinct race (Murdock 1959: 8) or, as Howells puts it, "a major racial variety of man" (1959:306). The obscurity of their origins and racial affinities are in themselves subjects in which research continues and interesting postulations engage the attention of scientists in various fields.[4]

PHYSICAL FEATURES · The physical features of the Bushmen have drawn much attention from anthropologists. Bushmen are of small stature (adult males average approximately five feet, two inches) WITH YELLOWISH BROWN SKIN THAT BECOMES HEAVILY WRINKLED IN OLD AGE.

Gathering Mangetti Nuts

eral large groves of mangetti trees (*Ricinodendron rautanenii* Schinz) in the region, all on great waterless white sand dunes, and one extensive area in which *tsī* grows. *Tsī* (*Bauhinia esculenta* Burch) is the seed of the vine that runs along on the surface of the ground. Both mangetti nuts and *tsī* are excellent foods, rich in oils and proteins, and so important to the !Kung that they organize their lives to a considerable extent around them.

Each band, according to !Kung social structure, owns and lives within what we call a territory. The band, through its headman (in a way to be explained later), owns the veldkos and water resources within its territory. The territories are varied in size and shape and sometimes consist of portions that are not even contiguous. The boundaries are vague, for the need to draw fine boundary lines is not great. In the interior of the region, where water is so scant, in roughly 8000 square miles live only 17 bands, comprising 447 persons. The other bands and employed groups live on what we call the periphery of the region. The !Kung say that one cannot eat the ground itself so it does not matter to whom it belongs. It is the patches of veldkos that are clearly and jealously owned, and the territories are shaped in a general way around these patches. The !Kung of the interior have settled themselves in such a way that every band has access to areas of edible roots and to either a mangetti grove or a *tsī* patch. A few bands have both.

The strong concepts of ownership of veldkos by the band operate almost like a taboo. No external force is established to prevent one band from encroaching on another's veldkos or to prevent individuals from raiding veldkos patches to which they have no right. This is just not done. Fear of fighting is one of the deterrents. The poisoned arrows of the Bushmen are as deadly

[p. 248]

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On the Move A Bushman hangs his possessions on a carrying stick and thrusts his assegai under the stick in back to distribute the weight onto both shoulders.

222 when the people go to gather mangetti's or tsi, the men always ac-
462 company the women and help to gather and to carry the heavy loads—as much as they possibly can—back to the water hole.

Though the men help, especially with *tsi* and mangettis, gathering and digging are the work of women and the work that takes up the greater por-
222 tion of their energy and time throughout their lives. Their digging imple-
[412] ment is a sharpened, unweighted stick about three feet long. When we were
[101] living with the Gautscha bands at the Gautscha water hole in the dry season, the women went to gather every day or every second or third day, depending on the distance and on how much food they could carry back. They would plan which patch or fertile area to go to and start out in small groups, some
[484] to one place, some to another. They would walk five or ten or fifteen miles
[361] to their destination and then pick berries or dig roots, which may lie two feet or more under the ground, until the mid-afternoon, and then start back
[854] to the werf (campsite) at the water hole. They carry their infants tied to
[482] them, small children on their shoulders, and the loads of veldkos in the
[372] bulges of their karosses (skin capes). When they near the werf, they pick up two or three logs for the night fires.

The veldkos that each woman gathers belongs to her and with it she feeds her own family, sharing with whatever relative or friend she wishes. Custom does not require her to share it in a systematic way with others as
252 meat must be shared. She cooks her veldkos in the coals and hot ashes,
264 pounds fibrous roots and hard berries in her mortar, and serves the food to her family as a family meal, usually in the evening. During the day, however, people may cook and eat little snacks at odd times.

222 Although there are numerous kinds of veldkos, we must not give the
433 impression that there is a great abundance. In fact, the opposite is true. Food
731 is scarce all over the arid Kalahari, where drought is the scourge on all—the cattle raisers, the dry farmers, and the gatherers of the wild foods.

628 There has been much intermarriage in the Nyae Nyae region. Families
166 therefore may have close relatives—with whom they have the right to live—
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15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

in several different bands, and they may choose among them. A band that owned comparatively good resources would tend to attract more members than a band with scant veldkos. This flexibility of residence pattern is one of the reasons that one finds the bands of the interior of the Nyae Nyae region relatively in balance with their resources, and varying in size.

WATER • Two or more bands may share the ownership of a water hole. Water holes keep their own rough population balance because, if water is very scarce, people will go to live elsewhere when they have the possibility of doing so.

In the interior of this region, in roughly 8000 square miles, there are three water holes that can be called really permanent. In the driest years these do not fail. Four others dry up only in years of severe drought. Six more are semipermanent: in a very good year they may yield a little water right through, but in a dry year they are sure to dry up. When the semipermanent water holes go dry, the bands who own them may break up temporarily and the families may go to live with relatives who are at permanent water holes, or they may go as whole bands to another water hole where they have relatives.

Water is not owned as exclusively or as jealously as veldkos. Water seems to belong more to mankind, as the animals do, and the ownership of water holes emphasizes more the managing than the withholding of the water. The headman controls the water. His permission should be asked by travelers or visitors before taking water, "because he knows what he has and what can be done," we were told. We saw small temporary water holes marked with bundles of grass thrust into forked sticks. This was to tell visitors or travelers that the owners of the water hole were in residence, as it were, and were counting on the water. We believe that in these circumstances water would not be taken without permission. Occasions are not likely to arise where permission need be refused. The !Kung know where the others are, or are likely to be, at a given time and know how much water is available. They plan better than to get themselves into desperate situations.

One source of water appears to be owned by individuals. It is the rainwater that collects in hollow mangetti trees. The water in trees is not stolen by others who go to gather in the same mangetti forest. Water, incidentally, is the only beverage of the !Kung in the interior of the region. They have no alcoholic drinks and use no infusions of herbs.

HUNTING AND MEAT SHARING • !Kung hunting regulations do not confine the hunters to territories. The game animals belong to no one until they are shot, and the hunters may follow them anywhere the spoor leads and may cross the territorial boundaries of any band. If hunters have made a kill in the territory of a neighboring band, they would not fail to give a present of

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A Bridal Scherm The groom, to the right, and the bride, to the left, are with companions. This scherm is a particularly well-built specimen of the Bushman house.

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digging stick in a crescent curve, and tamps the branches into them. She weaves the branches together at the top and perhaps ties a few with fiber cord. This makes a frame half a hemisphere in shape, four to five feet wide on its open side, three to four feet deep, and perhaps five feet high at the peak. The woman then lays armloads of grass against the branches.

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The fire, not the scherm, is the visible symbol of home for a !Kung family. Summer and winter, each nuclear family has its own fire. The families cover their coals with ash during the day and fan them up for cooking. Toward evening, men and women go to the veld to gather wood and bring back whole dead trees, enough to keep their fires burning brightly all night.

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The werf is the group of fires of all the families in the band. A !Kung werf has no fixed pattern of orientation except to cluster closely together. With all space around them, the band with whom we lived—Band I of Gautscha, consisting of thirty-two persons with eight family fires—usually huddled into a place roughly forty to fifty feet by about twenty. The light and warmth of their fires together wall them in from infinity and darkness and protect them from predators.

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The !Kung never return to a werf they have once abandoned. They come season after season all during their lives to the same water holes and veldkos areas, but always choose a fresh spot to make a new settlement.

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ARTIFACTS • The artifacts of the !Kung are simple and few but well made and well cared for. These people use stone only for sharpening metal blades,

[P. 256]

131 !goše, the first waterhole of the area. Continuing southwest
[133] from !goše the motor track parallels the course of a dry river bed called the !angwadum for 23 miles until it meets
131 the South West Africa border track. Along this route from
312 !goše to the border one passes the waterholes of Kamburungu, !angwa matse, !angwa, Bate, Kathikona, Mahopa, !Kabe, and !ǂhai. Each of these wells supports Bushman groups and Bantu cattle posts. Following the border track north from its intersection with the !angwadum one can reach Dobe which supports a resident population of Bushmen but no Bantu.
[133] Turning south from the intersection, one crosses the low ranges of the Aha Hills which are usually uninhabited and arrives after 25 miles at /ai/ai, a large waterhole with over one hundred Bushmen.

131 All these centers of habitation lie to the east and
361 south of Dobe. To the north, the nearest settlement is n!aun!au at a distance of 40 miles and, to the west, the nearest settlement is Tsumkwe, 35 miles away (see Map 8).

131 Eight naturally occurring waterholes support the bulk
312 of the Dobe area population which in November, 1964, stood
[161] at 763 people. There were 433 Bushmen residents, all but one
[563] of them members of the !Kung tribe. There were 340 Bantu, eighty-five percent of whom were of the Herero tribe. The remaining Bantu were Batawana, Mbukushu and Bayei.

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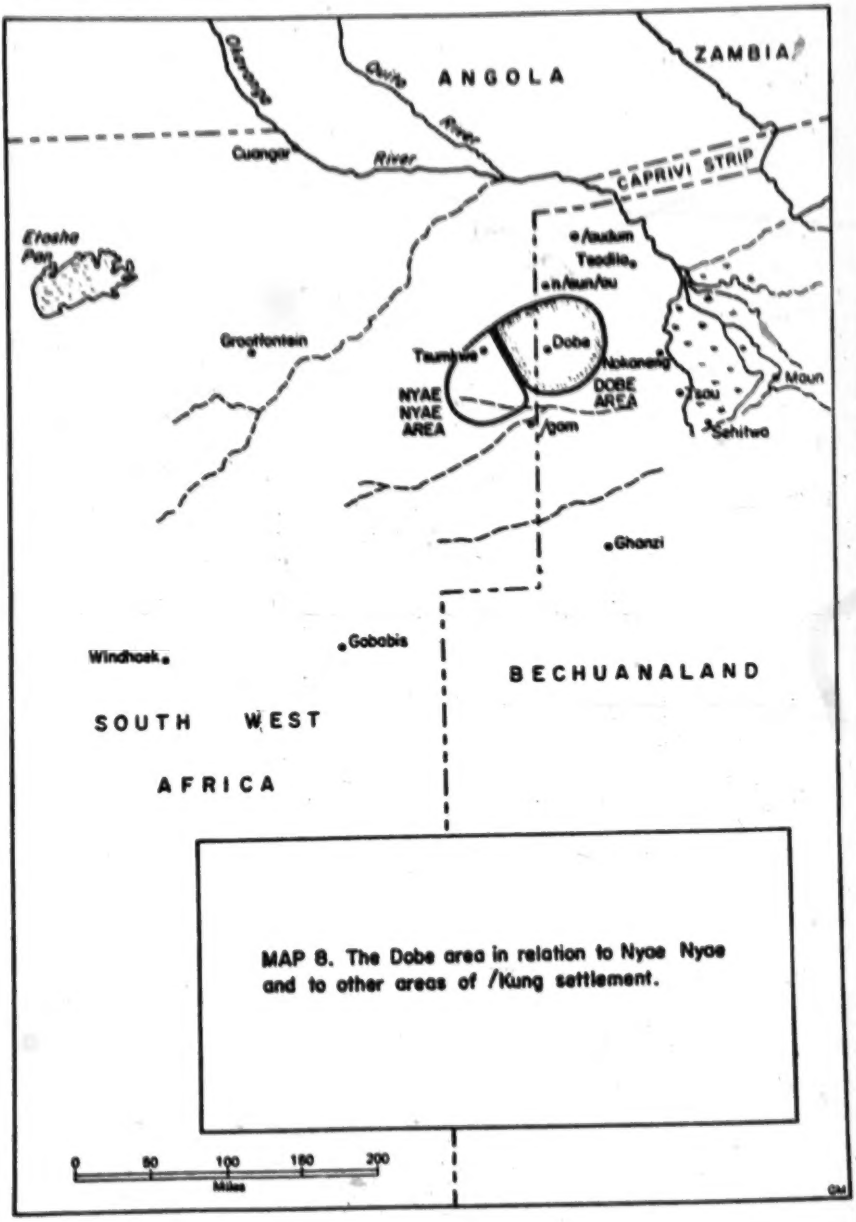

MAP 8. The Dobe area in relation to Nyae Nyae and to other areas of /Kung settlement.

attached to an independent camp were living with the Bantu. These working Bushmen, with their spouses and families, numbered 44 people.

The Batawana headman, Isak Utuhile, was the only one of the Bantu residents to maintain a staff of retainers and their families. This sort of benevolent feudalism is a common practice throughout the Tswana tribal areas of Bechuanaland (Schapera 1953:28; Tagart 1933) but, with this one exception, is absent in the Dobe area. The headman supports four assistants (including a uniformed Bushman police constable) and their families, a total of 13 people.

Finally there was an Ad Hoc grouping of 26 !Kung who lived at the kraal of Enamoharadi, a Herero woman at Mahopa. These people lacked a territorial nucleus and therefore could not be considered as an independent camp. Several !Kung women helped with the domestic duties but the majority chose to use Mahopa as a base of operations for hunting and gathering and to drink the milk of Enamoharadi's cattle when it was offered to them.

Except for the women who are married to Bantu, most of the !Kung remain only temporarily in Bantu villages, for periods ranging from one month to two years. Also it was observed that most of the !Kung living with Bantu spent at least half the year hunting and gathering. Furthermore many

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of the !Kung who were independent at the time of the census had a history of living with Bantu for periods in the past.

It is difficult to determine to what extent the !Kung living arrangements have been affected by the Bantu presence, beyond stating the obvious facts, that, until the Bantu came, there could be no intermarriage and no opportunities for employment. At this stage of analysis, it would certainly be premature to attribute the fluidity of band membership to the effects of contact, since there is good evidence that this flexibility is adaptive in the context of traditional subsistence patterns (see Chapters VII and VIII).

A history of contact

127 This historical sketch of the period 1879-1965 is based on the testimony of informants resident in the Dobe area. Since none of the Bushmen and very few of the Bantu had any knowledge of the dates of historical events, these were provided by discussions with the British administration at Maun and by a survey of the early literature on the area.

193 The pre-contact period - There is no evidence in their oral tradition that the !Kung of the interior have migrated there from elsewhere. This corroborates the !Kung belief quoted by Lorna Marshall that "they have lived in the Nyae

[194] Nyae area since time began" (1960:325). The interior !Kung cannot, by their own account, be considered to be recent refugees from more favorable habitats.

VII. LAND UTILIZATION

361 During 1963-64, the Dobe area was divided into nine territories within which the 15 independent camps were operating. These nine territories together covered about two-thirds of the total area (see Map 14).

361 312 There was not a direct relationship between the number of permanent waterholes, the number of territories and the number of independent groups. Although all of the independent groups had access to a permanent water, some of the permanent waters supported several groups, while at other permanent waters independent groups were lacking.

The number of territories and number of groups at each waterhole is shown in Table 6.

[222] At !goše there were four camps but all these camps moved within the same collecting areas. Similarly, for part of the time, there were two camps at Dobe but both camps utilized the same groves of nut trees and the same summer waterholes.

On the other hand, at /ai/ai three of the five camps had their own territories, while two of the camps shared a territory. The jointly occupied territory lay to the north of the /ai/ai waterhole, and the three other camps operated to the west, to the south, and to the east of /ai/ai, respectively.

At the !angwa, Bate, and !ubi waterholes, the situation

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16: Lee E-5 (1963-1965) 1966 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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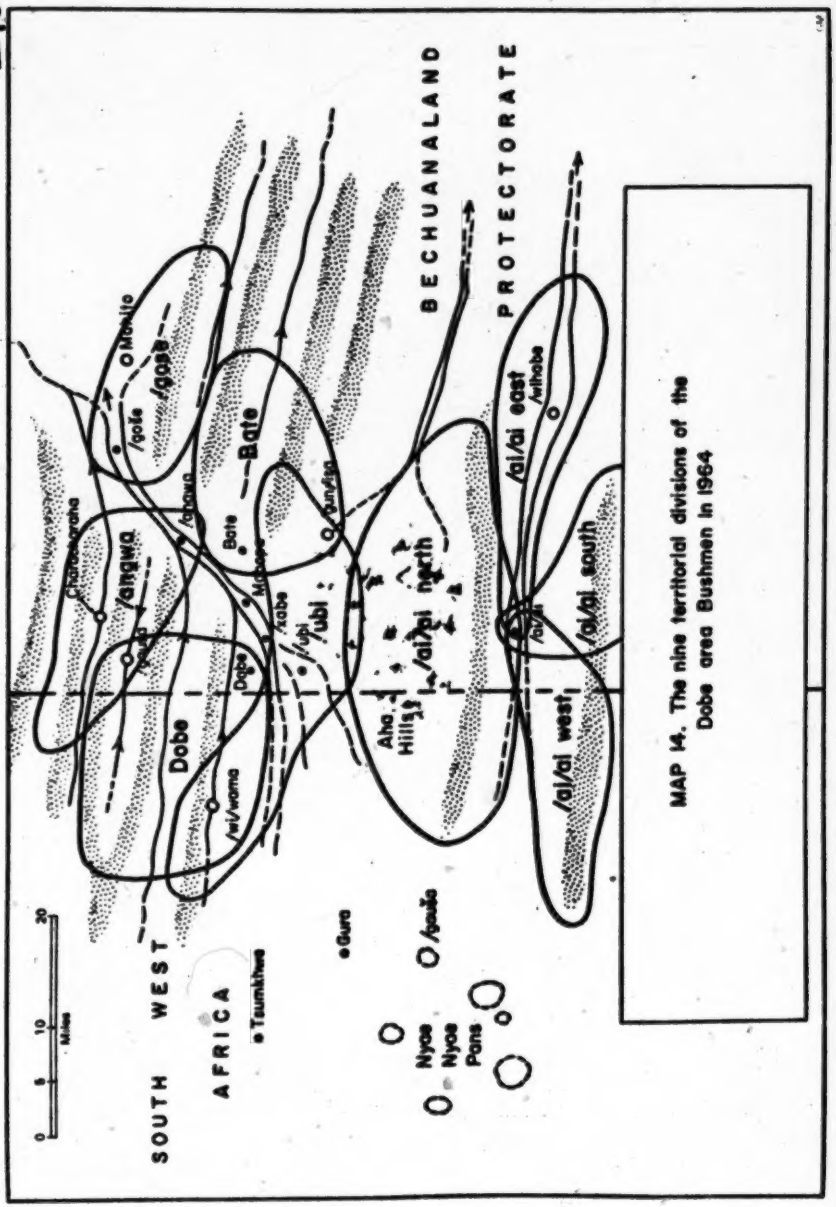

MAP 14. The nine territorial divisions of the Dobe area Bushmen in 1964

TABLE 6

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The number of camps and the number of territories based on each of the permanent waterholes in the Dobe area.

Name of Waterhole	No. of Independent Camps	No. of Territories
1. :goše	4	1
2. :angwa	1	1
3. Bate	1	1
4. Mahopa	0	0
5. :xabe	0	0
6. :ubi	1	1
7. Dobe	2	1
8. /ai/ai	5	4
	14[1]	9

[1]The 15th independent group had its permanent waterhole at Tsumkhwe, outside the Dobe area.

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312 was simple. Each waterhole supported one independent camp and each camp had its own territory.

Two of the waterholes, Mahopa and !xabe, lacked independent camps and therefore were not part of a territory.

[648] The Bushmen who drank at these waterholes lived in Bantu
[222] villages. They collected food in the adjacent territories of other camps such as Dobe !ubi and !angwa (see Map 14).

361 The sharing of a single territory by two or more camps
602 reflected the close kinship ties between the camps. This was obvious at Dobe where the leaders of the two camps were a brother and sister who often brought their two groups

[562] together to make a common camp. It was also obvious at !goše where the four camps were led by descendants and collaterals of one old woman. In previous years these four independent groups at !goše had lived in one large camp.

361 The territorial arrangements of the Dobe area !Kung Bushmen, like their group structures, were extremely flexible. Most territories overlapped with one or more adjacent territories. The boundaries of territories were vaguely defined and there were areas between territories which were not claimed by any of the camps. The Bushmen did not conceive of territories as areas of exclusive occupation. The concept of territorial defense was lacking. Each territory consisted, in the words of Mrs. Marshall, of "a waterhole and a side" (L. Marshall 1960:334). This point is illustrated in Map 14.

361 312 Each of the groups moves in a "direction" from its waterhole. For instance, the Dobe people move to the west and north, the !angwa people move to the northwest, and the !gose people move to the east.

361 The concept of territoriality as applied to the Bushmen differs from the concept used by zoologists in discussing the spatial arrangements of animals. The zoological usage refers to the exclusive use of space, by an organism or group of organisms who defend this space against competing members of the same species (Bourlière 1964:94-100).

By contrast the Bushmen groups do not defend boundaries and members of all groups travel freely between camps. However, land utilization is not at all a random phenomenon. [222] [224] The Bushmen population is organized into land-holding units, and the members of a unit tend to spend the greater part of the year hunting and gathering within a specific area.

Thus, in the context of this study, the term "territory" refers to the area within which an independent camp moves during the annual subsistence cycle.

361 824 [312] The locations and spatial configurations of territories are determined by the distribution of water and food resources. Each territory has within it a permanent waterhole, one or more seasonal water sources, and one or more mongongo nut forests. Every territory includes, in addition, a selection

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824 of summer foods such as the berries of Grewia spp. and melons of the Citrullus vines, and a selection of winter foods such as roots of the genera Vigna and Coccinia, and edible gums from the genera Acacia, Terminalia, and Burkea.

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824 No two territories have the same constellation of plant foods and no single territory provides the complete inventory of 85 species of plant foods. The Bushmen are well aware of the variations in plant resources between the several territories and there is general agreement on the "strong" and "weak" points of each territory. For instance, !ubi is famous for its Baobab fruits (Adansonia digitata), a food which most other territories lack. /ai/ai is known for the abundance of its wild orange trees (Strychnos spp.) but is considered "weak" in vegetable ivory palms (Hyphaene ventricosa) which are rare south of the Aha Hills. Dobe, on the other hand, is said to be "strong" in vegetable ivory palms and "weak" in the wild orange trees. Bate is famous for its groves of trees bearing the morula nut (Sclerocarya caffra) but is "weak" in trees bearing the mongongo nut [152] (Ricinodendron rautanenii). Furthermore, local variations in seasonal rainfall may produce an abundance of food in one territory and leave another territory with a food scarcity.

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433 The important point is that every territory has enough food to sustain at least some of its members throughout the

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433 year, but that territorial arrangements are flexible enough to permit people to collect and eat freely in territories other than their own. Thus there were no instances recorded of the members of one camp going hungry while there was still food available at other camps.

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602 Ecologically, the net effect of this flexibility of territories is to produce an equitable distribution of food resources throughout the population. Kinship, real and fictive, is the social mechanism which makes possible this equitable distribution. Each independent camp maintains ties of kinship and marriage with members of every other independent camp. Implicit in every kinship tie is an obligation to share food and water. When relatives are living together, the obligations are manifested in daily exchanges of food and in mutual aid. When relatives are living at

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574 different camps these obligations are latent. An individual who visits another camp will invariably set up his or her hut beside the hut of the member of the other camp to whom he or she has the closest kinship tie. The visitor is secure in the knowledge that the members of the camp will respect his or her claim to the resources of the area.

The principles of intercamp visiting will be illustrated by an example from the Dobe camp. N!ain!a, a woman about 55 years old, is a member of the Dobe camp. She is a younger

361 433 602 574 sibling of the leaders of the two Dobe camps, and therefore has an unquestionable claim to the Dobe resources. N!ain!a has two married daughters whom she frequently visits. One lives at !angwa and the other at Bate. These two daughters and their husbands make reciprocal visits to Dobe about once a month. N!ain!a has a classificatory uncle at !ubi. During the winter she would make daily trips to collect the Baobab fruits that are available only at !ubi. Her uncle, in turn, would make reciprocal visits to collect the vegetable ivory fruits which are abundant around Dobe. Thus N!ain!a maintains active claims in three of the territories adjacent to her own.

N/eysin!a (N!ain!a's older brother) is unlike N!ain!a in that he prefers to remain in his home territory rather than visit other camps. N/eysin!a's kinship ties with members of other camps are numerous but the reciprocal obligations implicit in these kinship ties remain latent because N/eysin!a rarely visits his relatives in other camps.

361 Inter-territorial visiting is perhaps the most important single principle of land utilization among the Dobe area Bush-

311 men. Concerning land utilization <u>within</u> the individual territory, three significant features should be noted.

First, each of the territories borders on an uninhabited hinterland of indefinite size (see Map 14). Because of this, it is difficult to derive an estimate, in square miles, of the

311 area of each territory.

[312] Second, the area and shape of an individual territory is
[824] influenced by the distance between the important resources within it, such as water sources and mongongo nut forests. It is these point resources and not the spaces between them that are the significant features of the landscape.

Third, territories overlap each other and there is disagreement as to the ownership of these overlapping areas. Most Bushmen say that these areas are owned by all, which means, in effect, that they are owned by no one.

Each of these features will be discussed in detail.

1. Hinterland - It was mentioned earlier that the Dobe area
[312] was surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country. Except for a few summer months there is no standing water in this belt and, as a consequence, the Dobe area people rarely bother to hunt and gather within it. This outer belt is not lacking
[136] in food resources, however. Surveys of the country by Land-
[137] Rover indicate that the game and plant foods there are even more abundant than they are within the traditional territories. Why then are these resources so infrequently utilized?

311 The answer lies in the fact that the Bushmen can usually
312 satisfy their annual subsistence requirements within a radius
• 361 of 15-20 miles from their permanent waterholes. Whenever possible the Bushmen prefer to make their camp sites at

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361 standing water sources. Since the number of these water sources is limited, it follows that the areas around the water sources will be the most intensively utilized. The Bushmen know how to live on alternative sources of moisture such as Fockea monroi but only resort to this subsistence strategy for a week or two at a stretch.

It is a good rule of thumb for the Dobe area that the intensity of utilization of land varies inversely with the distance from standing water sources. Since a Bushman group must spend the six dry months of the year at its permanent waterhole, it is not surprising that the area within a walking radius of this waterhole is intensively utilized. Similarly, since the Bushmen spend three months of the year at the large summer water sources, the areas within a walking radius of these water sources is also intensively utilized. During the brief period in December or January when there is standing water at many localities, the Bushmen can utilize areas that lie beyond a walking radius of the major water sources.

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These three levels of intensity of utilization are illustrated schematically in Map 15. This scheme disregards for the moment the actual pattern of distribution of food resources peculiar to each territory. The shaded circles enclose all of the areas that are within a six mile radius of a permanent waterhole. These are the only areas that can be reached by

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MAP 15. Intensity of land utilization as a function of distance from permanent waterholes.

- Within 6 mile radius of a permanent waterhole.
- Within 6 mile radius of a large summer waterhole.
- Within 20 mile radius of a permanent waterhole.

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a round trip hike of 12 miles or less.

The distance of 12 miles was chosen for this illustration, because this was close to the maximum distance that the Bushmen were willing to walk in a single day of food gathering. In the previous chapter it was mentioned that Bushmen hunters and gatherers do not stay away from their camps overnight. Therefore an individual hunter or gatherer will confine the day's activities to within a limited radius of his or her camp. These expressed preferences set the limits on the size of the winter areas of intense utilization.

A similar situation exists in the areas that are within a six mile radius of the main summer water sources. These are represented on Map 15 as unshaded circles. These further areas are intensively utilized during the summer months.

These areas of intensive utilization are surrounded by a belt of country that lies within a twenty mile radius of the permanent waterholes. Twenty miles was the average maximum distance from permanent water that the Bushmen were observed to range. This belt is enclosed by a dotted line in Map 15. It should be noted that the Bushmen groups spent on an average less than one month of the year working these areas. The great majority of their time was spent closer to the standing water sources.

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The Dobe area Bushmen were not observed to make camps

311 beyond the area enclosed by the dotted line, and this line
• 361 therefore accurately represents the total utilizable space of the Dobe area.

311 2. Point resources - In Map 15, the picture of land utili-
312 zation was simplified by omitting the actual patterning of
361 food resources. In fact, the extent and configuration of
824 the intensively utilized areas is influenced by the location of the mongongo nut forests and the distance of these forests from the permanent waterholes. These resources are plotted in Map 16. For instance, in an area where the mongongo nuts within a walking radius of water are sufficient to support a camp throughout the year, a group's territory will be small. However, in an area where the mongongo nuts are less locally abundant, the territory must, of necessity, be much larger.

The people of !goše, for example, are fortunate in having a vast nut forest within a ten mile radius of their waterhole. [162] The nuts from this forest are abundant enough to support the 62 members of the !gose camp throughout the year. By contrast, the nut forests near Dobe are much less abundant than at !goše. [162] The 36 members of the Dobe camps have to walk farther (up to 18 miles at the end of the dry season) in order to collect the mongongo nuts. As a result, the effective annual territory of the Dobe people is larger than that of the !goše people, despite the fact that the population of Dobe is smaller than

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 147]

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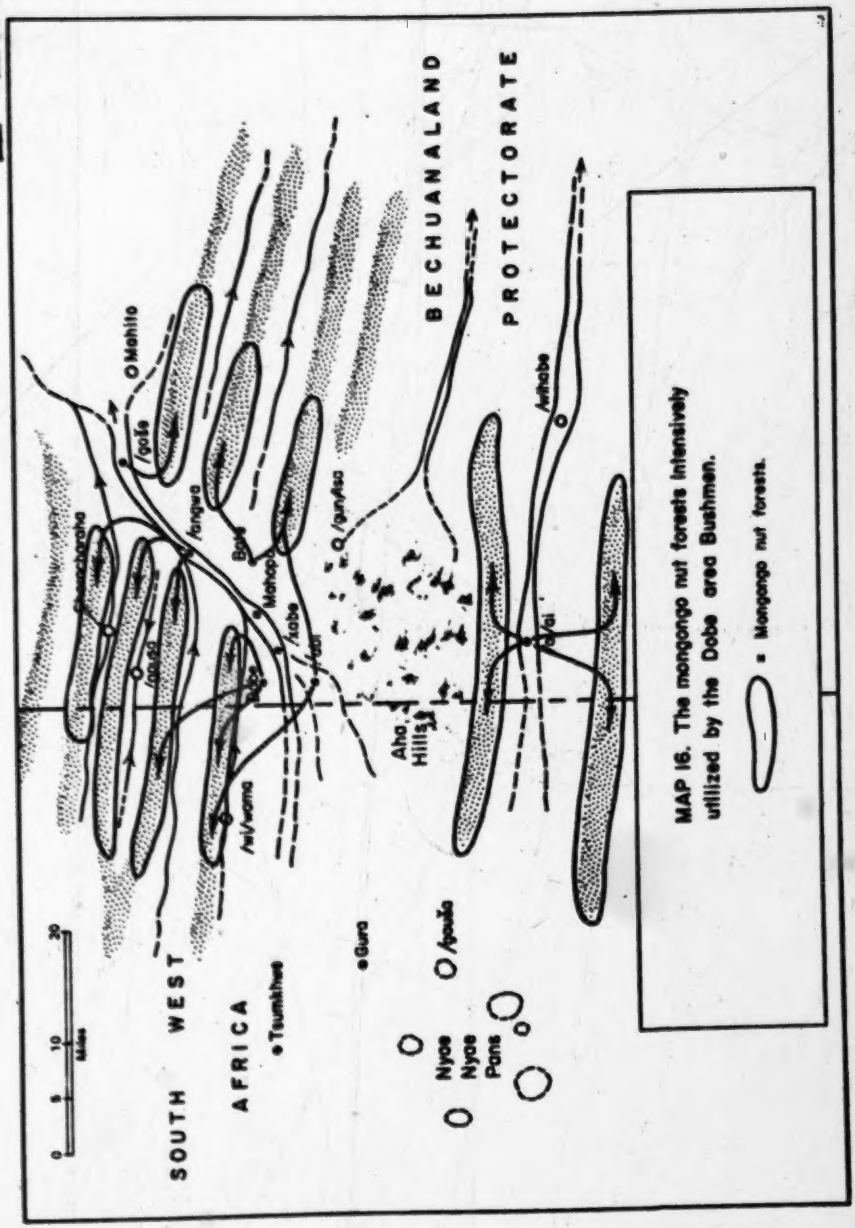
BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE
SOUTH WEST AFRICA
Aha Hills
Nyae Nyae Pans
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Ghanzi
Mahito
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Bobonong
Mahopa
Maun
Nokaneng
Sehithwa
Francistown
Serowe
Palapye
Mahalapye
Lethlakeane
Kanye
Molepolole
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• 361 the population of !gose (this is illustrated in Map 14 as well as in Map 16).

A further example will serve to illustrate how point resources influence the size of territories. It was mentioned above that each territory contains one or more large summer water sources. In most cases these summer waters are less than 12 miles from the permanent waterholes. In one case, however, the summer water is 23 miles distant from the permanent waterhole. The summer water at /wihabe belongs to the group of 27 people that works to the east of /ai/ai (see Map 14). This group lays claim to the land between /ai/ai and /wihabe. But they do not utilize this area in their subsistence activities. Rather they hike through it in order to move from one point resource to another, i.e. from their winter water at /ai/ai to their summer water at /wihabe.

3. Territorial overlap - Territories are so loosely defined by the Dobe area !Kung that certain areas are claimed by none of the camps and consequently are utilized by everyone. Wherever territories adjoin, there is a belt of "no-man's land" for which no one is prepared to make a definite statement of ownership. This uncertainty is usually expressed by informants as follows: "The owners of this land died long ago, today we don't know who owns it."

The Aha Hills illustrate this territorial overlap. The

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hills hold standing water only during the summer months. During this season, the members of two /ai/ai camps, the !ubi camp, and the Bate camp mingle freely at its water sources. This mingling of groups also occurs at some of the large summer pans such as !gauba and čharačharaha where members of different winter groups come together for weeks or even months.

The foregoing discussion has highlighted the flexible nature of !Kung Bushmen territoriality. This flexibility is manifested in the frequency of visiting between waterholes, the vagueness of territorial boundaries and the existence of food areas that are said to belong to nobody.

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221 The availability of water can be regarded as the most important determinant of Bushman subsistence activities. A season by season account of these activities will serve to illustrate how subsistence strategies take maximum advantage of water sources. The annual subsistence cycle is described under six headings:

1. First rains
2. Main rains
3. Autumn
4. Early winter
5. Late winter
6. Spring

1. <u>First rains</u>

The onset of the first rains finds the Bushmen clustered around their permanent waterholes. [361] [574] It is this time of year that camp membership is most stable because all areas are short of food and there are fewer incentives for visiting other camps. [132] Also the weather is hot with mean daily maxima of 100°F and walking is uncomfortable.

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221 Food, in the vicinity of permanent water, is in short supply. Fruits, berries, melons and leafy greens, which appear
824 only during the main rains, are nowhere available. The mongongo nuts are still abundant but are found only at distances of ten or more miles from the permanent waterholes. The diet

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433 physical condition of the Bushmen was visibly poorer in November 1964 by comparison with November 1963.

2. Main rains

132 The Bushmen say that a series of intense downpours
• 361 (measuring 2-3 inches) heralds the beginning of the main
[821] rains and ushers in their season of abundance. Such a fall occurred in 1963 at the end of November. The immediate effect of these downpours is to produce standing water in the small molapos that lie in the interstices of the dunes. When these seasonal waters become established, virtually the entire Bushman population moves out to live at them. Thus from December through March the permanent waterholes are largely deserted.

312 With the coming of the main rains, the summer foods
433 begin to ripen. These foods appear around the summer water
222 sources and they appear also around the permanent waterholes. It is significant, that, although foods become available at the permanent waterholes, the Bushmen tend to avoid these foods. They prefer to eat the foods that are around the summer waters. This illustrates one way that the Bushmen take maximum advantage of the more distant foods. They defer exploitation of the foods around the permanent waterhole until the winter when the alternative water sources have dried out.

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361 The distribution of camps during the summer follows two phases. In the early phase when water is standing in a dozen or more localities camps are found at most waters. This is the time of maximum freedom of movement because ponds fill up in the usually waterless belts and make it possible for people to visit relatives 35-70 miles away.

The distribution of camps in December 1963 is illustrated in Map 17, p.157.

The second phase of summer life begins as these smaller waters dry up in February and March. Then most of the Bushmen converge on the large summer waters such as !Gauŭa Pan (not to be confused with /Gauŭa Pan in the Nyae Nyae area).

!Gauŭa Pan in its peak season (Jan-March in 1964) was a pond 400 feet long and 125 feet across, located in a local [162] drainage area between two dunes. In addition to a resident [648] population of 40 Bushmen (aggmented by dozens of temporary visitors) the pan supported four Bantu cattle posts with [136] about 500 head of cattle. The pan was a watering place for kudu and wildebeeste and had resident flocks of red-billed teal, white-bellied stork and hammerkops. Within a 3 mile radius of the pan there were remains of at least ten abandoned Bushmen camps that had been occupied in previous years.

[162] Besides !Gauŭa there were four other big pans in the Dobe area, each of which supported large Bushmen camps (of

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 158]

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MAP 17. The distribution of the Bushman population in December, 1963.

• = 10 Bushmen

16: Lee E-5 (1963-1965) 1966 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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[162] 30 or more people) and Bantu cattle posts. These were located at Characharaha, Mahito, !gun/isa and /wihabe. Map 18 illustrates the distribution of population during the late summer (March 1964), p. 159.

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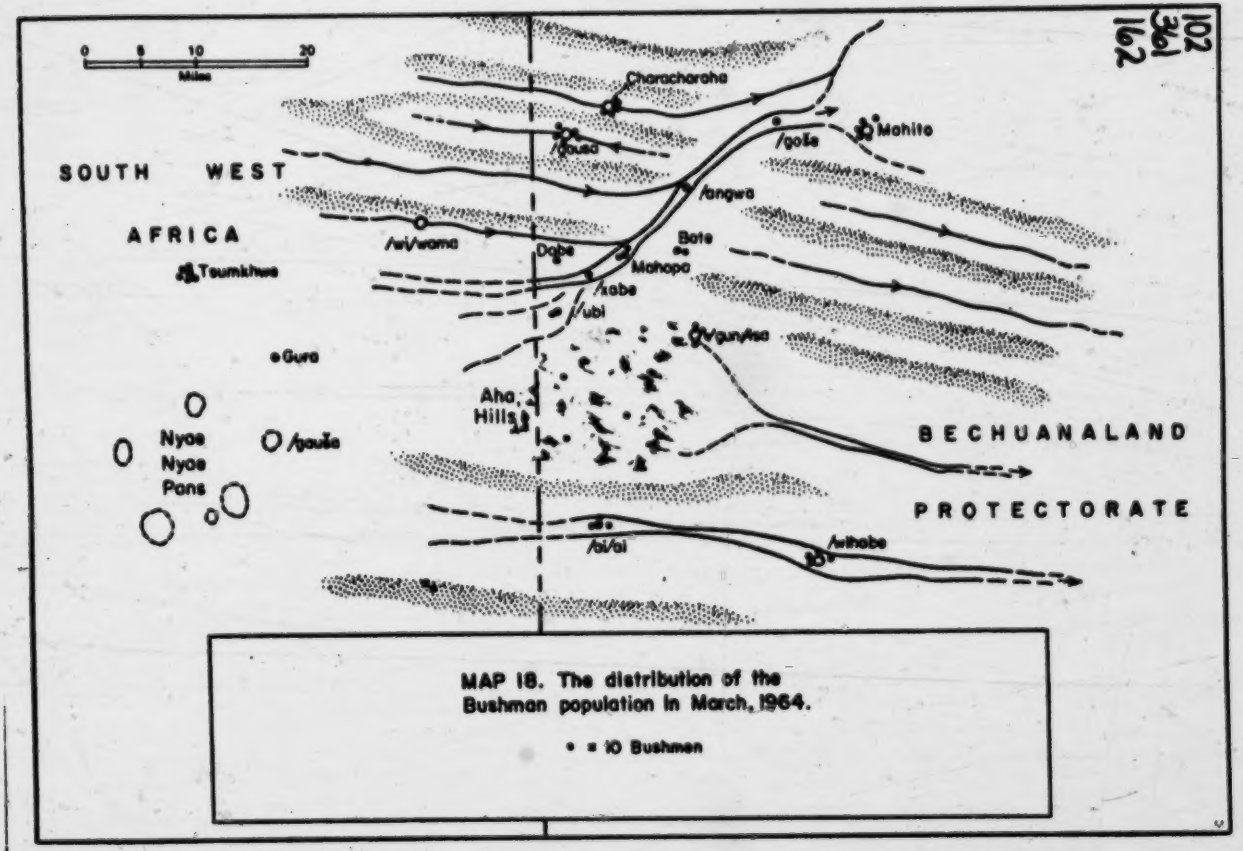
222 Life at the summer pans is, by Bushman standards, luxurious because all of the major and minor fruits, berries, melons and leafy greens become available. There is a succession of ripening of the major foods throughout the summer months. The first to ripen are the leafy greens (Dipcadi and Talinum), followed by the sour plums (Ximenia caffra and X. americana), then the melons (Citrullus lanatus and C. naudinianus), and the Grewia berries (Grewia flava comes first followed by six other species). By the time the plums have become scarce the melons are ready for eating. As the melons become worked out the Grewia berries ripen. Each of six species of Grewia comes into ripeness at a different time, so that every two weeks throughout the middle of summer another species of Grewia became ready for eating. Throughout the early part of the summer the mongongo nuts are available but these are the nuts from the previous year's fall. It is not until April that the current year's fall of nuts occurs. And then a new cycle of working out from the camp occurs. This illustrates again the selective gathering habits of the !Kung Bushmen.



MAP 18. The distribution of the Bushman population in March, 1964.

• = 10 Bushmen

000 meat no doubt lessens the men's incentive for hunting.

221 3. Autumn - which fell (in 1964) during April is the period
312 when these large summer waters are drying up. One by one the
• 361 big pans turn into muddy pools and the Bushmen abandon them. Some of the people join the camps established at the remaining summer waters while others fall back to their permanent waterholes in the main molapos.

!Gauša was the last of the summer waters to go dry. It was finally abandoned by May 1, 1964. By this date all the Bushmen had returned to the permanent waters and this marks the beginning of the winter subsistence cycle.

As mentioned previously the present study was made during a drought. There are indications in the literature that summer waters do not always dry out as early as May 1. The Bushmen themselves spoke of summer water persisting in previous years into the period of frost which does not come until June or July. It is also probable that the presence of Bantu cattle contributed to the premature drying out of the summer waters. However, these hypotheses cannot be tested except by further field work.

4. Early Winter

221 The winter season is not coterminous with the period of
312 food scarcity. This scarce period does not begin until mid-
433 winter and continues until the first rains. The first half

221 of winter from May to mid-July is a period of relative abun-
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433 dance. This is due to the fact that the permanent waters
• [361] have not been occupied during the summer months, and there is abundant food in their vicinity when the Bushmen return to
[824] them in May. Subsistence has a double base, including both the tail-end of the summer foods such as the Grewia berries, and the first series of winter roots and bulbs. Mongongo nuts are also locally available. The distribution of the Bushmen population during the winter of 1964 is shown in Map 19, p. 165.

221 The root foods are generally associated with the winter
824 subsistence. This is curious because as perennials the bulbs may be dug out at any time of the year. But the Bushmen do not concentrate on root foods during the summer months: they pass them over in favor of the foods of shorter duration, the fruits and melons. They state that they do not like the flavor of the root foods during the winter.

In May and June these root plants are exploited and the pressure on them increases through the winter as the nuts become locally exhausted. The major roots are Eulophia spp., Vigna dinteri, Walleria muricata, Coccinia spp., Coccinia rehmannii and Ceropegia spp. - nine species in all. These have edible bulbs or storage organs which range in size from one to three inches in diameter.

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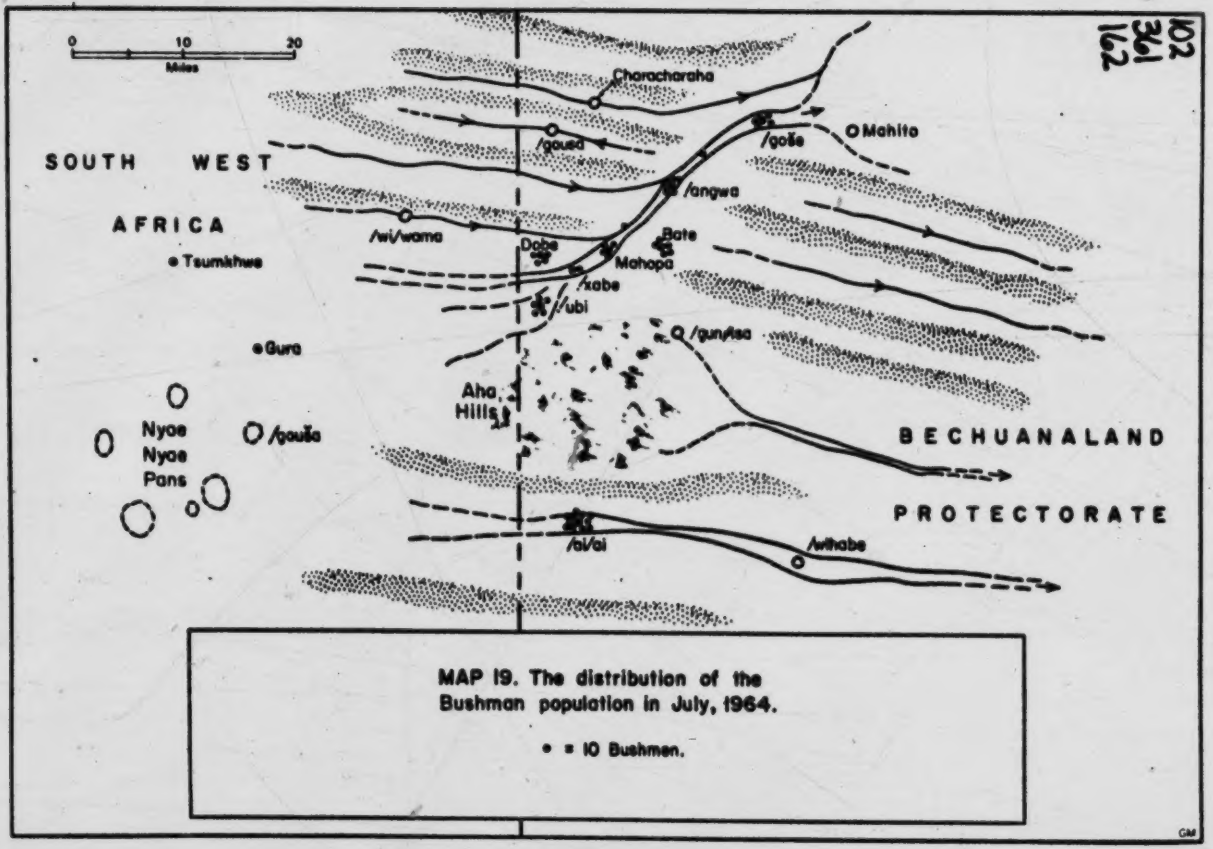

16: Lee E-5 (1963-1965) 1966 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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[162] There were nine adult men resident at this camp but only
[361] seven did any hunting. The eighth man was blind and the ninth was crippled. The seven hunters were n/eysin!a (60 yrs.) and his son /oma (35 yrs.); /oma//gwe (65 yrs.) and his three sons /ase (40 yrs.), /gau (35 yrs.), and n/eysi (27 yrs.); and /gaun!a (40 yrs.), the son-in-law of n/eysin!a.

[231] The most successful hunter, /oma (35 yrs.), hunted 16/28 days and killed four wart hogs and a bat-eared fox, all killed with the aid of dogs. Next was /ase (40 yrs), who hunted nine days. He snared two steenbok and a hare and killed a porcupine by cornering it in its burrow and digging it out.

Then there were the two old men both of whom hunted 16 days each. /oma//gwe snared a steenbok, a honey badger, a hare and a kori bustard, and collected a python. N/eysin!a snared two steenbok.

Old /oma//gwe's two younger sons hunted nine and eight days, respectively. The older of the two, /gau, snared one korhaan; the youngest son, n/eysi, also snared one korhaan.

Finally old n/eysin!a's son-in-law, /gaun!a, hunted four days but killed nothing.

[146] The seven men hunted a total of 79 man-days and killed 18 animals; the total weight of meat is estimated at 454 lbs. In addition, they received gifts of meat from other camps

251 were roasted in the coals of the fire and then pounded to
252 the consistency of coarse meal in the wooden mortar. This
262 roasted hide had the taste and texture of crisp crackling and was delicious when pounded and mixed with the flesh of roots of the genera Coccinia, Walleria and Eulophia. These stores of dried hide and meat did not serve as a staple surplus so much as an emergency delicacy to brighten the diet when a day's hunting had been unsuccessful.

221 The major food strategy during the hot dry spring was
222 the 7-14 day trip to the waterless country where mongongo nuts
312 were still plentiful. At these camps the only source of
• 361 water was the juice from the roots of Fockea monroi. Fockea
824 has an uneven distribution in the Dobe area. The Bushmen must camp in a nut forest that is in close proximity to patches of Fockea. The maximum period that a group was observed to live on Fockea roots was two weeks. The limitation is set by the density of Fockea plants in an area, and the amount of fluid that each plant holds. Life at the Fockea patches is difficult because people have to work hard to obtain water as well as food. Each Fockea root storage organ contains 8-16 ounces of recoverable moisture. Thus a daily ration of 72 ounces of water can be obtained by digging out 5-10 Fockea roots.

312 But the dilemma of living on Fockea lies in the fact that
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484 until 8:00 p.m. Before making camp we ate wild oranges along
123 the way (Strychnos ? vinosa) but these did not contain much
312 moisture. We camped at a point halfway between !wi/wama and Dobe and there shared out the last of the family's drinking water, which amounted to one quart for four adults and three children, that is c. 4-1/2 oz. for each of us.

484 November 8 - The camp awoke at 4:50 a.m. By 5:20 we had
123 packed and were under way, arriving home without incident at 7:30 a.m.

484 November 8-16 - This ended the author's participation in
312 the Fockea trip. Six members of the original group remained
361 at !wi/wama eating nuts and drinking the juice of Fockea. On the eleventh of November there was a heavy fall of rain at !wi/wama which created a temporary pool of water near their camp. This enabled them to extend their stay beyond the original plan of five days.

484 The same week that the rain fell, the pregnant woman of
361 the camp gave birth to a baby boy. The group remained at the
844 nut camp until the mother was strong enough to walk. Then they broke camp and returned to Dobe on November 16. Both mother and child appeared to be in fine condition.

132 The rain of November 11 was the first substantial fall
221 of the 1964-65 rainy season and initiated the subsistence activities associated with the late spring (see above). Thus

121 433 883 888 182 It is suggested that the delayed assumption of social maturity by the young people and the support of the non-productive elderly people are institutions which are possible only in a society with a relatively secure subsistence base.

433 312 221 361 Water, Food, and Nomadism -- The special subsistence problems faced by the Dobe area Bushmen concern the scarcity of water. All of the eight natural permanent waterholes are situated in or near the beds of the main molapos. During the summer months, when temporary pools develop at a distance from permanent water, the Bushmen can move out to live at them. Except for a few weeks each year, the Bushmen spend their entire lives camped within an hour's walk of standing water. Only at the end of the dry season do some of the younger people undertake the long trips to the dry forests where they live by digging out the water-bearing roots. Since it is the custom of the Bushmen to return each evening to their main camps, it follows that areas within a single day's walk of standing water will be intensively utilized. Areas that lie beyond this radius will be rarely utilized even though they may be rich in food. The fact that the Bushmen can live well for most of the year within a six-mile radius of permanent water indicates that they do not lead a nomadic way of life. Each summer they move up-country to the seasonal waters and each winter they fall back on their permanent waterholes. In contrast to some Australian aboriginal groups, whose annual round consists of walking a circuit of many waterholes, the Dobe area Bushmen have a

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361 transhumant annual round, in which they alternate between their rainy season range and their dry season range.

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628 The Dobe area !Kung do not undertake long marches of 30-70 miles for the purpose of getting food. This task can be readily fulfilled within a day's walk of their territorial water sources. When such long marches occur, they are invariably for the purposes of visiting, trading, and marital exchanges with relatives at distant camps. As such, these trips should not be confused with the normal routines of subsistence.

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162 Range Size and Population Density -- By plotting the movements of the various camps in their annual subsistence cycle, the observer can derive a rough estimate of the total land area that is required to support the population of 430 Bushmen. It would be much more difficult to estimate the area necessary to support a single camp, because of the considerable overlap of territories and the frequent visiting between camps. It will be more useful to treat the entire population as a unit. It is estimated that the 800 square miles that lie within a six-mile radius of major water sources are sufficient to support the population for most of the year. Beyond this radius lies a hinterland which is rarely penetrated; perhaps a further 200 square miles of this hinterland is utilized in the course of a single year. Thus the total annual range of the Dobe area Bushmen may be estimated at 1,000 square miles. This calculation sets the effective population

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office is hereditary. His authority is very slight, and apparently exercised mainly in regulating the movements of the people from place to place, and in leading in war.

Each band also acts as a unit in its relations with other bands of the same or of neighbouring tribes, and in such relations it is collectively responsible for the actions of any of its members. When differences arise they are confined to the bands concerned, and not participated in by the rest of the tribe. Occasionally, it is true, a weak band may seek and obtain assistance from a stronger neighbour, but such alliances are never of a binding or permanent nature.[1]

The band is also the land-owning group. Each band possesses its own hunting territory, to which it is restricted, and exercises authority over and specific rights within this territory only.[2] The members of the band roam about freely all over their own land, but do not trespass on their neighbours' territory, although single persons and small parties may occasionally pay short visits across the border, mostly for trading purposes. As a result of this territorial segregation it may often happen that the more widely separated bands of a tribe have no personal knowledge of or direct contact with each other.

There are no special boundary marks between the areas occupied by different hunting bands. The limits of each area are as a rule defined by various natural landmarks, such as sand dunes, koppies, river-beds, vleis, springs, or even trees. These are well known to the people themselves and carefully observed. In some cases the areas of different bands are separated by neutral zones, formed by belts of trees, open flats, watercourses, etc. Nobody will venture into these except during the course of a visit. In particular, however, each hunting territory is defined by the waterholes in it. These constitute the real property of the band. The encampments are always erected near them, all the game on the land around them or drinking at the water may be hunted only by members of the band, and similarly only they may gather "veldkos" (wild vegetable foods) in the vicinity. The infringement of territorial rights in this respect is one of the main causes of dispute between neighbouring bands, and almost invariably leads to bloodshed.

[1] The relations between different bands are discussed more fully below in Chapter VI, s.v. "Relations with Other Bands"; vide p. 155

[2] Trenk, op. cit., 168; Kaufmann, op. cit., 148, 156; Passarge, op. cit., 31–2; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke," 303; D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 4; Fourie, "The Bushmen," 85; Lebzelter "Bei den !Kun-Buschleuten," *Mitt. anthrop. Ges. Wien*, lix (1928–9), SitzBer. (12).

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are the serfs of the interdwelling Bantu, and the conditions under which they live do not, therefore, permit of their association in large groups.

In the tribes to the north-west who still retain to some extent their own mode of life and organization the communities are on the whole somewhat larger, although the numbers fluctuate a good deal. In the Kaukauveld Passarge frequently saw bands of up to thirty persons, and in the Mahuraveld of between twenty and twenty-five persons.[1] Among the Naron, again, Miss Bleek speaks of a camp containing from sixty to eighty persons,[2] while among the Auen, according to Kaufmann, up to thirty families, i.e. about one hundred persons, may be found camping together.[3] Both writers agree, however, in stating that the numbers may at times be considerably less. Müller visited eight camps of Bushmen in the Kaukauveld, and the figures given by him show that in six of them the population ranged between thirty and seventy, while the remaining two had one hundred and fifty and two hundred inhabitants respectively.[4] Seiner, again, states that the bands of the Kung average fifty persons, although he mentions two encampments in the vicinity of Karakuwisa which were considerably larger[5]; while among the Tannekwe he found five encampments of Bugakwe, whose population he estimates altogether as two hundred and twenty, eight of Garikwe containing all told about four hundred and thirty persons, and one of Gokwe with ninety.[6]

Not too much weight can be laid on the actual figures given, as for the most part they are based on what are obviously rough estimates, not accurate observations. There seems little doubt, however, that among the North-Western tribes the bands are on the whole more considerable than in any of the other tribes, and the average given by von François[7] of between fifty to sixty persons to a band may be taken as fairly representative, although as we have seen the numbers fluctuate a good deal.

Part of the difficulty in obtaining accurate information about the size of the band lies in the fact that the families composing it are not always found living together in one encampment. Within the

[1] *Die Buschmänner*, 9, 10. [2] *The Naron*, 4. [3] "Die Auin," 136.
[4] "Erkundungsritt in das Kaukauveld," 530. The actual figures are: 150, 40, 70, 70, 200, 30, 50, and 30.
[5] "Bereisung der Omaheke," 303, 302.
[6] "Bereisung des Gebietes zwischen Okawango und Sambesi," 104.
[7] *Nama und Damara*, 234.

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166 361 621 territory occupied by the band its members roam about freely in search of food, and family groups often separate from the main body to wander about on their own account for a while. Of the Naron, for example, Miss Bleek writes that she has "sometimes seen three or four huts together, sometimes twenty, with from sixty to eighty inhabitants. Every few weeks a new hut appears, or a vacant space shows where one has gone"; and she adds that as the village is such a fluctuating quantity it is difficult to estimate the numbers of a band or a tribe.[1] Indeed it seems to be a feature in the life of some of the Northern tribes that during the dry season the families in the band scatter about separately, to come together again only in the rainy [221] season, when there is an ample supply of water and "veldkos". Thus among the Auen only one or two families may be found living together in the dry season, while towards the end of and shortly after the rainy season, when the edible plants of the veld are abundant, up to thirty families may join together.[2] It is thus by no means unusual to find several small encampments of members of the same band scattered about over its hunting territory, a fact which may easily mislead casual observers with regard to its numbers.

361 619 621 On the other hand, it also appears that at times members of several different bands may come together for a while. Passarge mentions that in 1897, during an outbreak of rinderpest when cattle were dying in great numbers in the Ghansiveld, Bushmen were drawn together from all parts of the vicinity by the abundance of animal food thus provided. At one spot he saw between one and two hundred of them, at another about one hundred, and these included both Auen and Naron.[3] In the Kwebe Hills, again, his camp was passed by about one hundred men returning to the Hainaveld from the sandveld. Together with their women and children this group must therefore have numbered from three to four hundred.[4] It is almost certain that these people too must have belonged to different bands and had only come together temporarily, but this is not definitely stated by Passarge. Kaufmann, again, mentions a camp of Auen at Sidonitsaub which in April, 1908, contained about four hundred men, or with women and children about one thousand persons [622] all told. That these belonged to a number of different bands was

[1] *The Naron*, 4.
[2] Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 136, 138; cf. Passarge, op. cit., 42; Vialls, "Kalahari Masarwas," 30.
[3] Op. cit., 7, 8. [4] Op. cit., 10.

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obvious from the fact that although several chiefs were present, there was no common supreme chief.[1] Such gatherings are only temporary in nature, and produced by some special circumstance. They cannot therefore be regarded as indicative of the normal groupings of the Bushmen.

Social Structure of the Band

Within the band the only division is into families. The family among the Bushmen consists of a man and his wife or wives, together with their dependent children. It is a unit of outstanding importance in their social and economic life. The members of a family usually live together in one hut; the children until they are mature remain under the direct control of their parents, are nourished and are educated by them; husband and wife jointly contribute to the maintenance of their household, and the domestic tasks and industries are apportioned between them according to fixed custom. The family, moreover, has much freedom of movement, and, as already mentioned, single families will often roam about separately for a while within the territory of their band.

The relationship between the different families constituting a band is seldom defined clearly by the various observers. In particular the information available about the kinship organization of the Bushmen is very inadequate. Miss Bleek has recently published lists of relationship terms for each of the three main linguistic groups defined by her.[2] From these it appears that among all the Bushmen there are, in addition to various descriptive terms of relationship, also certain terms applied not to individuals but to whole groups of different relatives, while still others are used reciprocally between people standing in a particular relationship to each other. Relationship terms of the last two types, when found in other societies, are usually indicative of a definite organization of the community on the basis of kinship; and it is probable therefore that some such organization exists among the Bushmen as well. Unfortunately the lists given by Miss Bleek appear to be drawn from vocabulary sources rather than from an actual study of kinship itself, and cannot therefore be used with any degree of confidence. In any case they throw

[1] Op. cit., 138, 155. It should be mentioned here that the figures given by Kaufmann are, as a rule, far in excess of those given by other writers of about the same time and on the same district (e.g. Müller, German official estimate), and cannot therefore be accepted without question.

[2] "Bushman Terms of Relationship," *Bantu Studies*, ii (1924), 57–70.

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611 621 belong to the band of which their father is a member. But, as already mentioned, there are certain cases among the Naron where both married sons and married daughters with their respective spouses and children are found living in the same band. It would throw much light on the structure of the band if we could know whether all these children are regarded as members of the band in which their parents are living, or whether some distinction is made between the children of the married sons on the one hand and those of the married daughters on the other. Without further research in the field, however, no definite statement can be made on this crucial point. There is also nothing to indicate whether people who are related or claim to be related in the male line, or again those who are related or claim to be related in the female line, are specially bound together by ties of a ceremonial, legal or economic nature. Whether further research, therefore, will show the bands of the North-Western Bushmen to be clans is problematical. The trend of the available data gives no clear indication either way.

Encampments and Dwellings

361 221 [184] Moving about constantly as they do in the search for food, the Bushmen build no permanent homes. More or less fixed villages are found only among the tribes living in the Okavango-Zambesi region, but even here there are distinct quarters for the winter (dry season) and for the summer (rainy season). During the dry season the Tannekwe live in the marsh lands of the Okavango basin, where they have small villages surrounded with palisades, after the style of their Bantu neighbours. In the rainy season, however, these become uninhabitable. The people then move out to villages on the edge of the surrounding plains, where they also have their hunting grounds. The Hukwe on the plains north-east of Lake Ngami live in similar villages during the rainy season, from which they scatter about in family groups in the dry season to hunt and collect.[1]

361 342 Everywhere else the encampments of the Bushmen are temporary. The tribes formerly living in the mountainous regions of the south and east often made their homes in caves and under rock-shelters, in which relics of their occupation may still be found. Even to-day the Namib Bushmen, during the latter part of the dry season, also live chiefly in caves or under overhanging rock-shelters on the high

[1] Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke," 296, 297.

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mountains in the west of Great Namaqualand.[1] Most of the Bushmen, however, now live in flat country, where such natural shelters are denied them. Wherever they stay for more than a couple of days, crude bush huts are put up by the women. These are usually erected within walking distance of a waterhole, about an hour or two away. The people never live at the water itself, for fear of frightening away the game, which is most easily shot or trapped when coming to drink.

Among the Heikum, according to Fourie, "When it becomes necessary to desert an old camp and establish a new one the site for the latter is selected by the chief, who deposits his household and other effects on the place on which his own hut is to be erected. After the other members have done likewise he proceeds to light a new fire by means of firesticks. Brands from the fire of the old werft may not be used for this purpose. From the fire kindled by him each family then lights its own, after which the women may begin with the building of the huts."[2]

There seems to be as a rule no fixed form of settlement. All the families drinking at one waterhole may live in one group, or there may be several lots of huts scattered about in different directions. Among the Cape Bushmen, for example, one might find three or four huts standing together, or several huts dotted about within a radius of a few miles from the water, and the same appears to be true of the Naron.[3]

Among the Heikum, however, the camp is said to be laid out on a definite plan.[4] As a rule all the members of the band live in a common encampment or "werft" (*//gaus*). The huts of the married families are placed at a certain interval apart, and arranged in the form of an irregular circle. At or near the middle of the camp is situated a large tree, known as the */heis*. The hut of the chief (*gei-khoib*) is always placed in the east, facing, but at some distance away from, the others. The brother of the *gei-khoib* live immediately to his left on the south side of the *//gaus*, and beyond them are placed the other married families of the community. The right or north side of the *//gaus* is reserved entirely for visiting sisters of the *gei-khoib* and their families, while any of his married daughters who may be visiting him erects her hut directly opposite to his at the furthest extremity of the camp. "This is done on account of the parent-in-law taboo (*tao-sas*) which

[1] Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib," 166. [3] "Bushmen of S.W. Africa," 86.
[2] D. F. Bleek, *The Mantis and his Friends*, p. viii; *idem*, *The Naron*, 4.
[4] Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," 50–2; *idem*, "Bushmen of S.W. Africa," 86.

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361 [606] exists among the *Hei-//om* in common with other Bushman tribes." Within the circle of huts towards the south is the hut of the adolescent [882] young girls, and towards the north that of the adolescent young men; mature marriageable young women occupy huts next to those of their parents in the circle. Old widows and widowers, as also [589] visitors from any neighbouring group, live outside the circle of married people. The dancing place is to the west within the circle.

"The large tree (*!heis*) in or near the centre of the *//gaus* is reserved 361 562 as a meeting place for men for ceremonial and other purposes. Women are entirely forbidden to approach it or to join the men when gathered underneath it. To this, however, there is one exception, namely, [622] the wife (*gei-khois*) of the *gei-khoib* may go to it to obtain fire for kindling the principal fire (*!ou-|ais*) or for other menial purposes when required by her husband. With the exception of the chief nobody is permitted to live in close proximity to this *!heis*. Under [372] it is made the first fire (*!hei-|ais*) on the establishment of a new [224] *//gaus* and underneath it is deposited, for distribution, all meat killed in the chase."[1]

Fourie speaks of this camp arrangement as being present among 114 all the Bushmen in the northern parts of South-West Africa,[2] but the 361 only confirmation for this statement is given by Vedder, who just hints at a similar arrangement of the camp among the Kung. "Where several families live together," he says, "the huts are ranged in a circle, the head of the group ("Dorfälteste") living in the east."[3]

Each family within the group has its own hut. Where the families 592 are polygynous, the wives may live together in the same hut if they [595] get on well; otherwise each will build herself a separate hut. Children sleep with their parents until strong enough to go about by themselves. The bigger boys and young bachelors sometimes share [882] a hut together, but generally they sleep out in the open under a tree, and only in very wet weather will their mothers in co-operation build them a hut. Unmarried girls too old to sleep with their parents also share a separate hut. An old widower may live alone, or with [589] a boy; a widow and her little children, where they do not live alone, are generally quartered with the girls.[4]

The huts themselves (Plate VI) are somewhat crude, consisting 342 as a rule merely of a semicircular shelter of branches planted into

[1] Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," 52. [2] "Bushmen of S.W. Africa," 86.
[3] "Grammatik der !Ku-Buschmannsprache," 6.
[4] D. F. Bleek, *The Naron*, 4-5; Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," 52; Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 138.

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use the firesticks, but will not, and may not, light a fire with them in the werft, as firemaking is a matter of serious import and the chief is the only person who is able to bring forth from it the magic properties which bring health and happiness and ward off misfortune. The first fire kindled in a new camp is never allowed to die out."

As an illustration he cites[1] the practices existing among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan. Here, when it becomes necessary to move camp, as for example after a death has taken place, the whole community takes up all its goods and chattels, and, led by the *gei-khoib* (chief), sets off in search of a new site to be selected by the latter. Having found a suitable one he places his belongings on the spot on which his own hut is to be erected. His followers, passing on his left, take up suitable places for their huts in like manner. The chief then proceeds to the large tree (*/heis*) in the centre and kindles a fire underneath it by means of the firedrill (*hei-doros*). Fire from the old encampment or any other source may not be used for this purpose. He next applies *!norab* and *dabas* to the fire by scraping the roots of these plants with his knife over it and, after having done so, lights his pipe with it. This first fire or fire under the tree (*hei-/ais*) is next used by his wife (*gei-khois*) for lighting the fire in front of his hut (*/ou-/ais*). The fire is now free for use by the members of the whole group. The men may come and light their pipes from the *hei-/ais* and the women may fetch fire from the */ou-/ais* for kindling their own. Thereafter the latter may proceed with the erection of the huts. Should the *hei-/ais* go out, as sometimes happens during the absence of the *gei-khoib*, it may not be lit except by the latter himself. This he does with fire from the */ou-/ais*. The */ou-/ais* is attended to by the *gei-khois* and under normal circumstances is never allowed to die. A large log is always placed upon it before the chief and his wife will leave camp for any length of time. Should it go out during their absence and the other fires remain burning he, and only he, may kindle it with fire from the *hei-/ais* or from the other huts. In the unlikely event of all the fires having become extinguished during the absence of the inhabitants, no fires may be kindled until the return of the *gei-khoib*. If in such an eventuality he has gone far and is not expected to be home soon, his people will approach a neighbouring *gei-khoib* with whom they are on friendly terms and the latter will come and make a fire under the */heis* with the *hei-doros*. On the return of their own chief, however, all the fires will be put out and a new */ou-/ais* kindled

[1] Op. cit., 87–8; cf. *idem*, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," 52–3.

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372 622 by him by means of the *hei-doros*. The new */ou-/ais* now serves to supply the other members of the group. At times it may happen that all the members of the community may not be living in the *//gaus* (camp), but in some outside werft. This is usually the case only in times of drought when the game has moved far afield and great difficulty is being experienced in obtaining veldkos. Further, people driven out by another group and seeking protection are sometimes allowed to live some distance away from the *//gaus*. Such communities are not allowed to make their own fire or to obtain it from any other source, but the */ou-/ais* of the *gei-khoib* in whose territory they are living.

622 372 "Persistent ill-health among the members of the community or difficulty in obtaining veldkos or want of luck in the chase may cause the *gei-khoib*, either of his own accord or after consultation with his people, to proclaim that it is necessary to make a new fire. In such an event all fires, including the */ou-/ais*, are extinguished by being covered over with ashes. The *gei-khoib* at the same time notifies all outside camps of his decision and the latter likewise extinguish their fires. He then kindles a new */ou-/ais* in front of his hut with the *hei-doros* and applies */norab* and *dabas* in the manner described above. The new fire is not made on the same spot as the old fire, but a few feet away from the place on which it has been."

114 372 622 "The custom of kindling and maintaining a perpetual fire," Fourie goes on to say, "is met with among all the organized primitive groups" of Bushmen in South-West Africa. The only previous information hinting at observances of this kind is found in a curt statement by Kaufmann that among the Auen the "captain" of a village sees to it that the fire does not go out. But he adds that there is no "sacred" fire, and attributes the guarding of the fire against extinction to the practical inconveniences of the method employed in making it.[1] Quite recently, however, Lebzelter has reported the occurrence of similar observances among the Kung, although his remarks on the subject are very scanty. He states merely that the Kung, like the Bergdama, have the sacred fire round which only the men may sit. "When the camp is moved," he concludes, "the head of the group takes with him a brand from this fire"[2]—presumably to use it for

[1] Kaufmann, op. cit., 139; "Der 'Kapitän' (Aichab) der Werft achtet darauf, dass das Feuer nicht ausgeht. Ein 'heiliges' Feuer ist nicht vorhanden. Die Bewahrung des Feuers vor dem Verlöschen geschieht lediglich aus praktischen Gründe, da das Feuerquirlen immerhin ziemlich anstrengend ist."

[2] "Bei den !Kuñ-Buschleuten," 14: "Wie die Honigkaffern haben auch die !Kuñ das Sochafeuer. Es ist dies das heilige Feuer, bei dem nur die Männer sein dürfen. Wenn die Werft übersiedelt, dann nimmt das Werftoberhaupt einen Feuerbrand mit Sochafeuer mit."

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Chapter VI

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

Land Tenure

Each hunting band among the Bushmen, as we have already noted, claims rights of ownership over a certain stretch of land, and vigorously resents trespass upon it by members of other bands. Within the band land is owned in common. The hunting territory belongs to the whole band, and all the members of the band have an equal right to hunt and collect over any part of it and to use the water in it. Often the members of the band are scattered apart, so that the same territory is exploited by the inhabitants of several different encampments. These encampments, as we have seen, are not made up of any fixed number of families, but fluctuate a good deal in size. Whatever their momentary disposition, however, their inhabitants always roam within a definitely limited area, and it is always the members of the same band who establish these different encampments within its bounds.

As the Bushmen practise neither agriculture nor pastoralism, there is no question of cultivation or grazing rights. There is said, however, to exist a certain private ownership of land among the Auen, in the sense that when a man burns a patch of veld in order to promote the growth of veldkos on it, he alone has a claim to its products. Others, even people living at the same encampment, may not gather veldkos on this patch without his permission.[1] Somewhat analogous to this are the private rights recognized by all Bushmen over objects found in the veld. A man who finds an ostrich nest with one or two eggs, for example, sticks an arrow in the ground close by as a sign of ownership, and waits until the tale of eggs is complete before carrying them off. Should another man take the marked eggs, the first finder follows the spoor to the thief's hut, and demands them back. If they are restored, there is no fighting, but the thief does not escape reproaches for wrongdoing, especially from the neighbours of the finder; while in case of refusal bloodshed almost inevitably follows. In the same

[1] Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 155.

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big game, especially wild horses and mules. There are in [224]
those parts wild horses and mules, both so beautifully bred
out by nature that no painter is skilful enough to paint 136
them true to life with all their colouring. The horses have
buttocks extraordinarily dappled, and over the rest of the
body are striped yellow, black, red and pure sky blue. The
mules are also striped, white and chestnut brown, but not
dappled, and are uncommonly beautiful.[39]) The Sonquas in 439
1662 brought the skin of one of these beasts to the Cape,
which our countrymen bartered from them for tobacco and
other things. It was then filled with straw and hung up for
show in the hall of the Fort, as something curious and
uncommon, which it also is, to be seen by the people of the
incoming ships.[40])

The meat of the rock-rabbits constitutes a pleasant food 262
for the Sonquas, who live principally on it and on certain 231
roots growing in the ground. They also keep many hunting
dogs,[40a]) trained to hunt the rock-rabbits which are their 224
principal food, and knowing how to drag these animals out
of their holes.

They are extremely great plunderers and marauders. 721
They steal from other Hottentots all the cattle they can get,
with which they then flee immediately to the mountains,
where they cannot be found in their retreats and hidden
caves by anybody, not even by other Hottentots.

Their huts, made only of branches twined together, 342
without woven mats, and covered solely with rushes, are 361
several thousand in number; for they move about from one
place to another, and never break up the huts, but erect
still others wherever they camp.

Their little cloaks are sewn together from the skins of 291
the wild oxen which live on the rocks. The women have a
quitazol or sunshade of ostrich feathers, tied on and about
the head, to protect themselves from the heat and burning
of the sun's piercing rays.

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had shot a wild horse below the mane in the neck. This horse was 136
very beautifully gray dappled over its whole body, except behind
from the back over the buttocks and along the legs which were
flame-coloured, with white, sky blue and reddish brown stripes,
wonderfully beautiful . . . It had small ears like a horse. The
stuffed heads and pieces of skin which the Hottentots sometimes
brought to us belong evidently to another sort, as they have
long ears, though extraordinarily, curiously and beautifully
flame-coloured in white and chestnut brown."

[40a]) Dogs were the only domestic animals kept by the Bushmen. 231
They were generally lean, hungry-looking mongrels, half starved
and savage tempered, but excellent assistants in the chase, for 224
which they were mainly employed.